



3 1761 04444 6888

DA  
890  
R6G7



Presented to  
The Library  
of the  
University of Toronto  
by  
W.S. Wallace, Esq.







38

I

ROSSLYN



# ROSSLYN

THE CHAPEL, CASTLE AND SCENIC LORE

By WILL GRANT, F.S.A.Scot.

DYSART & ROSSLYN ESTATES  
KIRKCALDY

ROSLYN

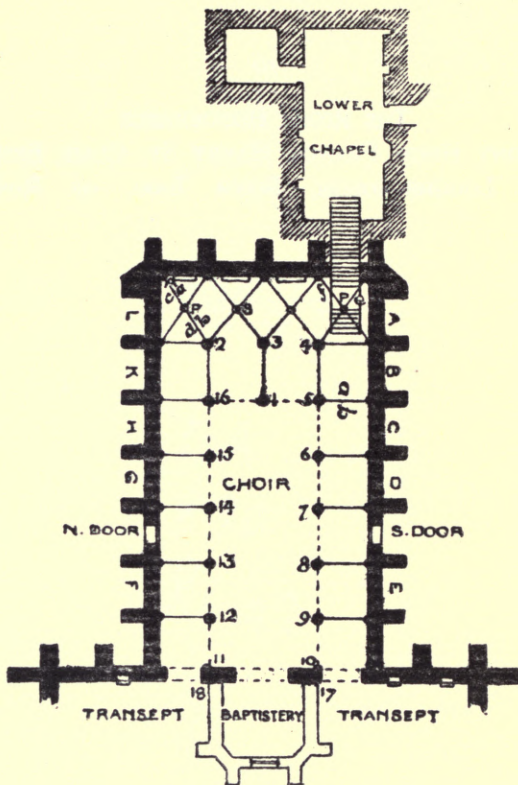
642073  
13.9.56

DA  
890  
R667



TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
ANTHONY HUGH FRANCIS HARRY ST. CLAIR ERSKINE,  
LORD LOUGHBOROUGH, SIXTH EARL OF ROSSLYN



GROUND PLAN OF CHAPEL

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	xi
ROSSLYN VILLAGE	1
ROSSLYN CHAPEL	5
Entering the Grounds—The Founder—An All Stone Chapel—How Long in Building—Completed by Founder's Son—Endowments Lost—Old Pentland—Of What Does the Chapel Consist—Altars Cast Down—Ceases to be House of Prayer—Chapel Restored—The Crypt—Coats of Arms—The Vaults—Sir Walter Scott on the Last of the St. Clairs—Grand Master Mason—"The Lordly Line of High St. Clair"—The Earls of Rosslyn.	
CARVINGS	35
Like the Temple of Jerusalem—Bible Story in Stone—What to Look For—In the Interior—The 'Prentice Pillar—Scandinavian Mythology—The Stafford Knot—Virtues and Vices—Detailed Description of Carvings.	
CARVINGS IN THE WINDOWS	52
STAINED GLASS WINDOWS	54
CONTEMPORARY HISTORY	57

## ROSSLYN CASTLE

64

The Lantern Tower—Great Dungeon—Lived in Great Magnificence—The Castle in Flames—Castle Again Burned—Castle Vaults and Staircase—Battered by Cromwell's Troops—Lift, Speaking-Tube, Drainage, Water—Periods when built.

## ROSSLYN'S SCENIC LORE

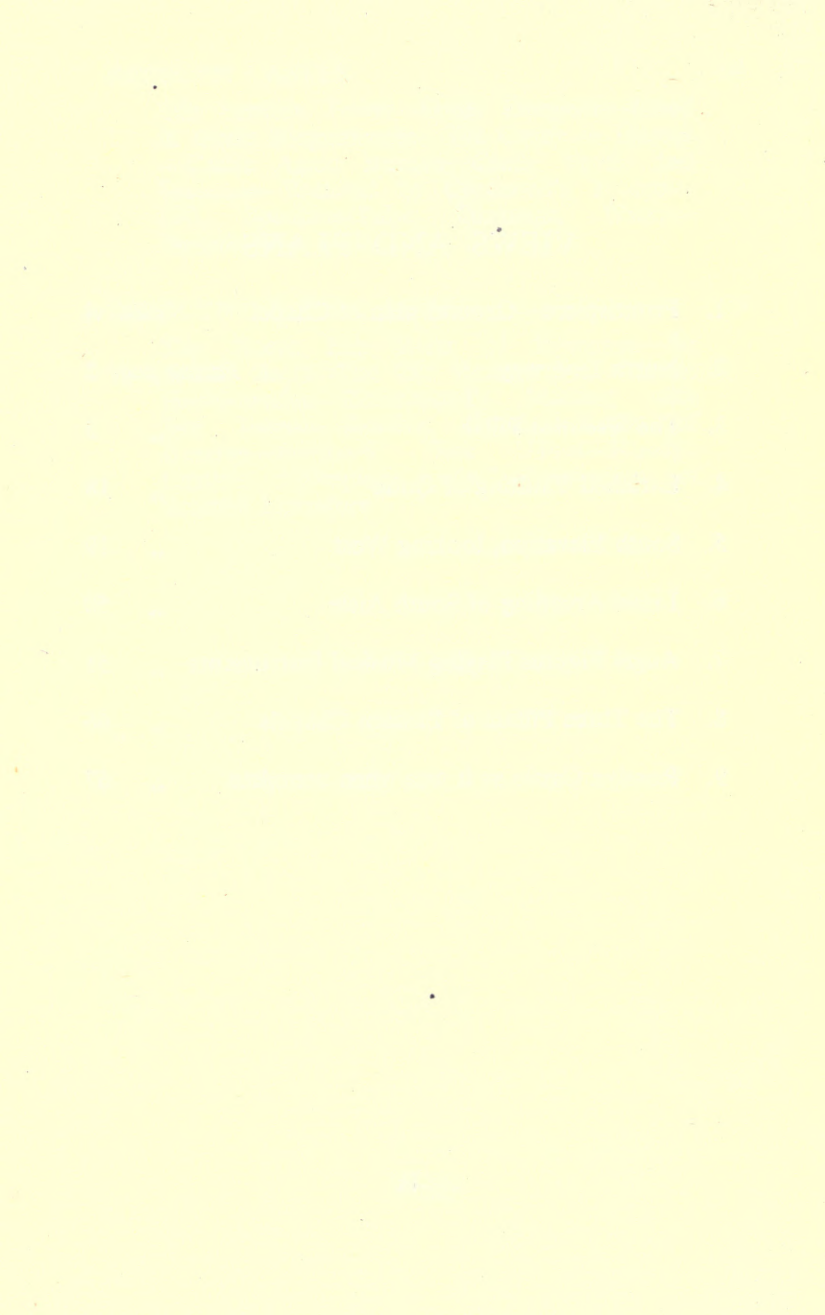
75

The North Esk—River of Romance—Sir Walter Scott—The Old Rosslyn Inn—Classic Hawthornden—Drummond's Meeting with Ben Jonson—Rosslyn Gypsies—Battle of Rosslyn—Pentland Deer Hunt—Rosslyn Castle's "Sleeping Lady"—Inspiration of Scottish Literature.



## VIEWS AND PLANS

1. Frontispiece—Ground plan of Chapel	PAGE vi
2. North Doorway	<i>Facing page 2</i>
3. The 'Prentice Pillar	„ 3
4. Enriched Vaulting of Quire	„ 18
5. South Elevation, looking West	„ 19
6. Lintel Arcading of South Aisle	„ 50
7. Angel Figures Playing Musical Instruments	„ 51
8. The Three Pillars of Eastern Chapels	„ 66
9. Rosslyn Castle as it was when complete	„ 67



## INTRODUCTION

**R**OSSLYN can be reached in twenty-seven minutes by car from the centre of Edinburgh. It is a thrilling journey ; for with every hill you climb out of the City the view expands—Arthur Seat, Liberton and Craigmillar Castle on the one hand; the conical Blackford hill and the rolling Braids on the other, with the Moorfoot hills in the distance. While all around is seen—

“ Lothian’s fair and fertile strand  
And Pentland’s mountains blue.”

The Pentland hills beckon with their intriguing contours and glorious colours towards the Mecca of Rosslyn. Like the city itself the surrounding countryside is full of glamour and romance.

The purpose of this book is twofold. First, to enable visitors to see as much as possible of Rosslyn Chapel and Rosslyn Castle in a limited time, by making the information clear and concise, so that a good general idea can be obtained at a glance. Second, by enlarging some of the sections with full detail, as in the case of the carvings and ornament, to assist those who have time at their disposal, to understand it more fully. The longer the time spent in this small Chapel the richer the reward, the more deep and lasting the impression of its wonder, its glory and its power.

The Ground Plan showing position of pillars and architraves and the groining of the roof of the Lady Chapel, numbered and lettered, and the windows lettered in Roman capitals, is a guide to the section on the Carvings. For a period the Chapel was in an almost ruinous condition, exposed to the ravages of weather and the hand of the spoiler, and it says much

for the care with which it has since been guarded that the stone fabric is still perfect after five centuries, and that it retains much of its pristine beauty.

Rosslyn Chapel has been likened to a Hindu Temple, but there is no need to go to India, or to Greece, Florence, Canterbury or York until we have seen this fine Scottish gem of pure Gothic. And we can come again and again, and find something new. "You cannot bathe twice in the same river," said Heraclitus, "for it is renewed every moment"; and Emerson reflected, "A man never sees the same object twice; with his own enlargement the object acquires new aspects." So it is with Rosslyn.

The book tells the story of this wonderful Chapel, which of old was called "The Chapel amidst the woods," and the ancient Castle, gives a glimpse of contemporary history, and concludes with a sketch of the historical lore, literature and romance of the Rosslyn and North Esk countryside. And not least it provides a memento of one of Scotland's most beautiful shrines.

In my researches I have investigated most of what has been written on the subject of Rosslyn, and find that little fresh information of importance has been available since the MS. collections of the "Genealogie of the Sainte-claires," 3 vols., 1700, by Richard Augustine Hay, Canon Regular of St. Genevieve, Paris, and Prior of Pieremont, and MS. extracts therefrom by Dr. Forbes, Bishop of Caithness—"An Account of the Chapel of Roslin," 1774, which extracts appear in the Edinburgh Magazine for January, 1761 (Ruddiman).

Based upon these are various Guide Books—"A Description of Rosslyn Chapel, with engravings," 1815: "Historical and Descriptive Account of Rosslyn Chapel & Castle," with eight engravings (Oliver & Boyd), 1825: McDowall's New Guide, used along with the 1825 Guide in compiling the New Statistical Account (Roslin), 1843: "Rosslyn and Hawthornden" by Cuthbert Bede (Rev. Edward Bradley, 1827-89): and the "Illustrated Guide" by Rev. John Thompson, F.S.A., to whose faithful



descriptions I have given full consideration, and acknowledge my indebtedness.

Other valuable contributions are found in the "Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries, Scotland," vol. XII, p. 218 (Chapel), p. 412 (Castle), 1876-7; vol. II (1927-8) (Chapel Carvings): "The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland" and "Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland" (MacGibbon & Ross): "Transactions of Edinburgh Architectural Association," vol. IX (1928). Other authorities are mentioned in the text. I also acknowledge the assistance I have received from the Curator, Mr. John Taylor, F.S.A.Scot., who is most zealous in all that pertains to the Chapel. Scottish historical and family records hidden in charter chests and cellars may yet contribute much to our knowledge of the ancient state of Scotland, and of the activities of those who made Rosslyn Chapel and Castle famous.

This book marks the five hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Chapel, and interest in this extraordinary treasure is still as widespread as ever, as witnessed by the vast numbers of all nationalities who visit it annually. I trust that the present account may help to make it even more widely known.

### Acknowledgement

Permission to reproduce the photographs has been granted by: W. H. Nicholson, O.B.E., John Aitkinson of The Scottish Tourist Board, George Oliver, D.A., and Norward Inglis of Edinburgh.



## ROSSLYN VILLAGE

**T**HE modern spelling is Roslin, but the old spelling of the village name, as well as that of the Earldom, is Rosslyn, which has been adopted throughout this narrative. It is derived from the two Celtic words Ross—a rocky promontory, and lynn—a waterfall, both being features of the river scenery below the Chapel and Castle. An earlier spelling was Roskelyn—a hill in a glen, which might apply to College Hill, upon which the Chapel stands.

The village, which is cross-shaped, with the Chapel at the head, was of some importance in the mid-fifteenth century, under the fostering care of the St. Clair family. While the Chapel was being built it was accounted the “chiefest town in all Lothian, except Edinburgh and Haddington, and became very populous by the great concourse of all ranks and degrees of visitors that resorted to the Prince at his Palace or Castle, for he kept a great Court.”

On June 13, 1456, James II erected it into a Burgh of Barony, with a market cross, a Saturday market, and an Annual Fair on St. Simon and St. Jude’s Day (28th October). It was to St. Matthew that Rosslyn Chapel, or as it was originally planned, the Collegiate Church of St. Matthew, was dedicated, on 21st September, 1450 (*Pro Soc. of Ant., Scot., vol. 12*). An earlier church, prior to 1446, situated in the cemetery, just below the Chapel, of which the date is unknown, was also dedicated to St. Matthew. It is sometimes stated that these Dedications were linked with the date of the Battle of Roslin, which marked the beginning of Scotland’s victory in the fight for Independence, but that day—24th February, 1302, was St. Matthias’s Day not St. Matthew’s Day.

The first of the St. Clairs to reside at Rosslyn was

Sir Henry St. Clair, who lived in the days of David I and William the Lion, being knighted by the former, appointed an ambassador of the latter to King Henry II to re-demand Northumberland, and fought at the Battle of Northallerton in 1138. Confirmations of the Rosslyn Charters were obtained from James VI and Charles I in 1622 and 1650 respectively, both proclaimed "with sound of trumpet" at the market cross of Edinburgh. Rosslyn is thought to have been founded by Asterius, whose daughter Panthoria, a Pictish lady, married Donald the First, A.D. 203, so that the place is of great antiquity. Rosslyn was at that time a great forest, as also the Pentland Hills, where there abounded great numbers of harts, hinds, deer and roe, with other wild beasts. ("Genealogie.")

Opposite the two Hotels is the Parsonage, once owned and occupied by Prof. Jamieson of Edinburgh University, Professor of Natural History, and a distinguished mineralogist and geologist. Rosslyn was the site of one of the earliest linen bleachfields in Scotland (on the level ground beneath Rosslyn Castle), originated by Robert Neilson, son of William Neilson, Edinburgh, Lord Provost in 1719, when the Provost's gratuity was "settled at £300 upon his oath that he would accept nothing else." Robert acquired a fortune of £150,000 in France, lost it all, travelled in Holland and acquired the art of bleaching linen, and, returning to his native country, established the bleachfield at Rosslyn, where he once again prospered. There was a bleachfield at Corstorphine in 1698.

Coal-mining had an early origin in the district. The monks of Newbattle first worked coal at Prestonpans in the twelfth century; and Morrison's Haven, built in 1526, was the exporting centre. The making of carpets, gunpowder and paper still continue in the district, and agriculture is a staple industry.

If Rosslyn was the "resort of a great concourse of all ranks of people" in the days when the Chapel was being built, it was no less so in the days of Sir Walter Scott, for immediately after the publication of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" in 1805, Rosslyn and the whole Eskside and Pentland district became a focus





NORTH DOORWAY



THE 'PRENTICE PILLAR



of resort for all visitors to Scotland's Capital, such was the influence upon the author of the "Border Minstrelsy" of the romantic vicinity of Rosslyn's "Castled rock," speaking of past magnificence and almost regal power, its lordly owners, and its centuries of human history and destiny. So it was that after the "Dirge of Rosabelle," which forms a charming feature in the "Lay," had directed special attention to Rosslyn, a coach was first started to convey tourists to the spot. The little village awoke and found itself famous in song and in popular favour. The four-in-hand coaches to Rosslyn became a feature of Edinburgh's Princes Street, with their high-spirited horses, gaily caparisoned, the driver in black-velvet-collared red coat and broad-brimmed silk hat, breeches, leggings and white gloves. The guard, similarly attired, with his long shining horn, which he flourished with evident gusto, reminding visitors that the Coach for Rosslyn and Hawthornden was about to start. Soon it was filled to capacity, and the gay equipage set out for Rosslyn with a sounding horn and a merry jingle. How it all reminded one of Sir Walter's description in "The Antiquary" of the "Hawes Fly" or Queensferry Diligence—"green picked out wi' red, three yellow wheels an' a black ane," and the "Caravan," "The Fly" and Croall's Stage-coaches that passed Rosslyn on the way to Peebles by Auchindinny, Cleikhim-in (*i.e.*, lifting the toll-bar and passing the traveller through) The Howgate and Venture Fair, in days when there was excitement and romance in travel upon the road. It was during the times of the picturesque Rosslyn four-in-hands that accommodation was built in the village for the use of visitors, for the place soon became the annual resort of thousands of tourists. The old Inn of Rosslyn that entertained so many celebrities in its day, was at the Chapel gate. Motor-buses have now superseded all the old-time coaches. Indeed motor transport now passes through or near Rosslyn that will take you almost anywhere in the South of Scotland—to Border towns where there are comfortable hotels, to some of the finest hill and river scenery, fishing, walking, hill-climbing; to the

famous Border Abbeys, romantic Tweeddale, and the Scott country, the Allan Ramsay and the Carlyle country, Moffat Spa and the Galloway Highlands. All you require is a map, and your hotel proprietor will provide the bus time-table.

For the benefit of parties visiting the Chapel and Castle by motor-car, it may be stated that there is ample free parking accommodation at both, and facilities for food and rest at the latter, where the glorious prospect of the Esk valley may be enjoyed in comfort, and one may muse in the sunshine on things past and present. A trans-atlantic visitor as he looked out upon the storied landscape at Rosslyn Castle remarked—"Yes, we have our fine places in the States also, and many finer, it may be, but what ours lacks is the embodiment of the soul of the scene—the ancient chapel, castle, mansion: we have no such places hoary with age and hallowed by history and the centuries-old procession of humanity witnessing to the purpose that persists through war and revolution, and man's efforts in civilisation, pointing to what your poet has described—that one far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves." Such experiences stir the imagination, and furnish us with a new perspective, broaden the mind, and enhance the value of travel. A new assessment of our present gift of life is learned by the study of the history of the past.

## ROSSLYN CHAPEL

**F**ROM all over the world visitors come to this Chapel. Why do they come? Because its fame is world-wide. It is one of the most remarkable churches in existence. Truth and Beauty, Poetry and Imagination are here enshrined in stone in a Sanctuary dedicated to the service of the Most High. It is so unique, so original, so unlike anything either before or after it, it conforms to neither contemporary architecture nor to any fashion. Rich in ornament beyond compare, its exact place in the creations of mankind still remains difficult to estimate. Little wonder that visitors arrive full of enthusiasm, eulogy, and high hopes, and thoughtfully depart "lost in wonder, love and praise," marvelling at the love that inspired its Founder, and the overwhelming enthusiasm, resourcefulness of spirit, and vision of its builders and craftsmen. To have seen Beauty, Truth, even for a moment, is to make life immortal.

Is it a purely Scottish piece of work? Opinions differ. Foreign influence is clear—Portuguese and Spanish and Burgundian, and you would need to go to St. Radegonde at Poitiers or Genoa for the proposed nave arrangement. This is not surprising in view of the close interchange of art and culture between Scotland and the Continent of Europe in those early centuries. One writer (Fergusson—"Handbook of Architecture") goes so far as to say, "There can be no doubt the architects came from the North of Spain," because he discovered some characteristics prevalent in the Continent—the churches of Burgos and Oviedo, for instance, and that "the tunnel vault of the roof with only transverse ribs is such as those found in almost all the old churches in the south of France."



“The art (architecture) of this Chapel is in no sense whatever Scottish, and we must look probably to Portugal as the country of whose art it is an example.” So we read in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “Architecture,” by Professor T. H. Lewis and G. E. Street, R.A. As the work was to be unique in character, and elaborate in detail, no doubt the best workmen that could be obtained were brought from France, Italy, Spain and Portugal; although we need not leave out the craftsmen for which Scotland was famous, many of whom would be employed at Rosslyn. The finest specimen of a Scottish medieval Hall—that at Linlithgow Palace, built by James I, is without any trace of Southern influence, and when Rosslyn Chapel was being built there were two Scots sculptors in the service of the Duke of Burgundy.

Rosslyn Chapel is essentially Scottish in character, but with a richness in detail and exuberance of carving not found elsewhere. Scottish features are seen in the window jambs and arches, bases of pillars, string courses, figure canopies on the buttresses, square-headed doorways and lines of window tracery. Sir Daniel Wilson said, “It is altogether a mistake to regard the singularly interesting Church of Rosslyn, which even the critic enjoys while he condemns as an exotic produced by foreign skill. Its counterparts will be more easily found in Scotland than in any other part of Europe.” (“Archæology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland.”) And the writer of the “Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland” remarks that “it draws on the riches of almost every phase of Gothic architecture except that which was contemporaneously present in England. A similarity in certain respects to the 14th century Glasgow Cathedral has also been commented upon.

So you see Critics do not agree. In architecture as in all Art there will always be diversity of opinion: and each of us is entitled to his own opinion. Rosslyn Chapel has a beauty of its own, effective in composition, fine proportions, good lines, arresting in its bold originality, a veritable “Church of the Holy Grail.” More to be desired than all architectural details is its

ancient sanctified beauty, so that the pilgrim as he enters is one with the Psalmist in the thought:

“ How lovely is thy dwelling-place,  
O Lord of hosts, to me!  
The tabernacles of thy grace,  
How pleasant, Lord, they be! ”

### ENTERING THE GROUNDS

As we enter the Gate of the Chapel grounds we observe that over it is a massive carving of a Coronet and a Helmet and Shield. This together with the jambs and lintel came from the ruins of the Castle nearby. On the inside over the gate was an incised slab lying lengthwise, inscribed “ William de Sincler ” surrounding a floriated cross and sword. This stone has now found a more secure resting-place in the Crypt. It was found in the churchyard of an earlier church, of date unknown.

Lifting our eyes we at once become conscious of the venerable appearance of the Chapel with its rich, mellow colouring, and it is not surprising that this northern side finds favour by artists, and all who are appreciative of the artistic setting and scene.

What we see before us on this ridge of rising ground called the College Hill that slopes down to the River Esk, is but a part—the Choir only—of what was originally intended to be THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW, not a large church, but a fair-sized sanctuary in the form of a cross, with a lofty tower in the centre, but which was never completed, in consequence of the death of the Founder in 1484. As a Collegiate Church there were to be on the foundation a Provost, six Prebendaries and two choristers or singing-boys. The building of Collegiate Churches for the spread of spiritual and intellectual truth was a noteworthy feature of that age in Scottish history, no fewer than thirty of such Churches, many of them with schools attached, being founded in the period from the capture of the young James I by King Henry IV in

1406 till the death of King James IV at Flodden Field in 1513. It was indeed a great age of Scottish architecture both religious and secular, and in these days when so few specimens remain, we are fortunate in having such splendid examples as those of Rosslyn Chapel and Rosslyn Castle.

### THE FOUNDER

Who founded the Church? Sir William St. Clair (commonly Sinclair), third and last Prince or Earl of Orkney, a great man, cultured, intellectual, representative of the highest society, surnamed "Prodigus," Knight of the Cockle and Golden Fleece, who lived during the reigns of the Scottish Kings—James I, II and III.

When the St. Clairs took the name of Rosslyn, or when they became possessed of the estate is unknown; but it is believed that the estate or barony of Rosslyn, and perhaps the Castle, also, were possessed of a family who were called "of Roslyn" or "Roskelyn" long before the St. Clairs appeared.

Who is our authority regarding the family? The answer is Richard Augustine Hay, whom we mentioned in the Introduction. His mother, Dame Jean Spottiswood, daughter of Sir Henry Spottiswood, High Sheriff of Dublin, Master of the Green Cloth, was grandniece of Archbishop Spottiswood, Church Historian ("The Church of Scotland" A.D. 203-1625), and widow of George Hay, son of Sir John Hay, Lord Register. She married Sir James St. Clair of Rosslyn, who died in 1699. Richard was born in 1661, baptised in The Tron Church, Edinburgh, by Dr. Wm. Annan, attended school at Edinburgh, Dalkeith, Traquair, and when his mother married a second time was "tossed up and down till at length he was sent to France about 1673-4, and there thrust into the Scots College for the poor scholars of Grisy," where he began his studies. He went to Chartres and "settled himself pensioner in ane ancient Abbacie of Canon Regulars, where he finished his rhetoric as he had done other parts of his

grammar at Paris." He became Canon at St. Genevieve, Paris, 1678, and in 1685 Priest in the Chapel of the Palace of Chartres. The Abbot of St. Genevieve gave him a Commission in 1686 for establishing in England and Scotland the Canon Regulars, and he returned to Scotland. He tells of the landing of the Prince of Orange, the Meeting of the Estates in Edinburgh, 14th March, 1689, and the "Act for approving the address made by the Noblemen and Gentlemen to King William containing just thanks for delivering them from the imminent encroachments on the laws, fundamental constitutions, and from the near dangers which threatened the overturning of the Protestant religion," regarding all of which Father Hay writes in the "Genealogie of the Hayes of Tweeddale," which includes Memoirs of his own times. We learn that he was on intimate terms with Lord Auchinleck, father of James Boswell (1740-95), biographer of Samuel Johnson. Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, representative of the ancient family of that name, became an Advocate in 1729 and was raised to the bench as Lord Auchinleck in 1754; he died in 1782 at the age of 76; and as Father Hay died in the Cowgate of Edinburgh in 1735-6 "embittered by penury," it may have been with young Alexander Boswell, the Advocate, he was acquainted. ("The Auchinleck Chronicle.")

Father Hay made examination of the historical records and Family Charters of the St. Clair family, and completed his manuscript writings in three folio volumes about the year 1700. These I have examined in the National Library, Edinburgh. Part of them was published in 1835, edited by James Maidment, under the title "A Genealogie of the Sainteclaires of Rosslyn, including the Chartulary of Rosslyn." This I have also perused. The book is scarce as only twelve large paper copies and 108 small paper copies were published. The original Charters were later accidentally burned, so that it was well that Father Hay's work was completed before this took place. From this history we learn that the family descended from one Woldonius or Wildernus, who took the name of Saint Claire from



the place where his estate was situated in France. As "Earl of Saint Clair" he married a daughter of Richard, Duke of Normandy, father of William the Conqueror, and their son William St. Clair — "William de Sancto Claro, second son of Waldernus Compte de St. Claro," surnamed for his fair deportment "The Seemly St. Clair" came to England with the Conqueror, and fought in the Battle of Hastings, 1066. After this many from Normandy and England came to Scotland, lured thither by the grants of land which Malcolm Canmore was wont to bestow upon those who fled to him from William's tyranny, or who sympathised with the fortunes of Edgar Atheling and his sister, Queen Margaret. William St. Clair, says Father Hay, was sent by his father to Scotland "to take a view of the people's good behaviour," and Queen Margaret being attracted by his wisdom, King Malcolm made him her Cup-bearer. He also obtained "the Barony of Rosline, so called because it represents a peninsula, being environed almost on all sides with water." He became Warden of the Southern Marches, in defending which he was killed. His son Sir Henry, who lived in the Conqueror's time, "got of the King and Queen, Rosline with the Barony of Pithland" also called "Penthland" (Pentland); and married *Rosabell* (daughter of the Earl of Stratherne), a name which remained in the St. Clair and Rosslyn families for all time. ("Genealogie.")

Another gives the origin as follows:—(1) Walderness, Compte de St. Clare, having married Helena, daughter of the Duke of Normandy, cousin-germain of William the Conqueror, came over to England with that great Prince in 1066; his son (2) William de Sancto Claro came to Scotland soon after, and being a youth of distinguished merit, was well received by King Malcolm Canmore, became Steward to Queen Margaret, and obtained a grant of the lands and barony of Roslin. He was father of (3) William Sinclair who married a daughter of the Earl of March, by whom he had a son, (4) Sir William Sinclair, whose son (5) Sir Henry Sinclair of Roslin married a daughter of the Earl of Mar by whom he had a son (6) Sir William Sinclair who died in



1270 and was succeeded by (7) Sir William Sinclair. He was appointed High Sheriff of the Shire of Edinburgh in 1271. He was one of the Magnates Scotiae who obliged themselves to receive and defend their lawful Queen and Sovereign Margaret, daughter of Erick, King of Norway, in case of King Alexander's death: without male issue, in 1284: and that same year he was appointed one of the Ambassadors Extraordinary to negotiate the marriage of King Alexander III. He was also one of the Scottish Nobles chosen on the part of King Robert Bruce in his competition for the Crown with John Baliol in 1292, and was afterwards with many of his countrymen compelled to swear allegiance to King Edward of England in 1294. He died about the year 1300. His three sons were Henry, progenitor of the family of Sinclair of Dunbeath, William, Bishop of Dunkeld, and Sir Gregory who flourished in the reign of King Robert Bruce. (Sir Egerton Brydges MS. Biographies, Nat. Lib. Edin.).

We shall leave the family there for the moment; and ask the question we all wish to put:

What were the motives of William, the Third Earl of Orkney, in building Rosslyn Church?

Well, he is described as a man "given to policy, as building of castles, palaces, and churches." He succeeded his father, who died about 1417, and built a large part of Rosslyn Castle, and made improvements and enlargements. Then Father Hay tells us that Prince William, his age creeping on him, came to consider how he had spent his time past, and how he was to spend his remaining days. "Therefore, to the end that he might not seem altogether unthankful to God for the benefices he received from Him, it came into his mind to build a house for God's service, of most curious work, the which, that it might be done with greater glory and splendour, he caused artificers to be brought from other regions and foreign kingdoms, and caused daily to be abundance of all kinds of workmen present, as masons, carpenters, smiths, barrowmen, and quarriers, with others; for

it is remembered, that for the space of thirty-four years before, he never wanted great numbers of such workmen. (Work was going on at the Castle for many years). The foundation of this rare work, he caused to be laid in the year of our Lord 1446; and to the end the work might be more rare: first, he caused the draughts (draft plans) to be drawn upon Eastland (Norwegian or Hanseatic, probably from the Baltic) boards, and made the carpenters to carve them according to the draughts thereon, and then gave them for patterns to the masons, that they might thereby cut the like in stone (not an unusual practice even before that date); and because he thought the masons had not a convenient place to lodge in near the place where he builded this curious College, for the town then stood half a mile from the place where it now stands, to wit, at Bilsdone (Bilston) Burne, therefore he made them build the town of Rosline, that now is extant (end of 17th century), and gave everyone a house and lands. . . . He rewarded the masons according to their degree, as to the Master Mason he gave forty pounds yearly, and to everyone of the rest ten pounds, and accordingly did he reward the others, as the smiths and the carpenters, with others."

### AN ALL STONE CHAPEL

Rosslyn Chapel is the most interesting specimen existing of this type of Chapel wholly built of stone. Why then were so many carpenters employed? The explanation is in the use of so large an amount of "Eastland boards" for the drawings and patterns, and also for the scaffolding and centering, especially for the vaults, arches and roof, which would no doubt be on a large scale, and would remain in position till the work was completed. The high and weighty roof alone would require much timber.

### HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO BUILD?

Building began after the foundation stone was laid in 1446, and it is thought that it was 36 to 40 years in

building. Doubt was cast on Hay's date of the foundation, some thought it earlier, but the date seems to have been settled, although the Foundation Charter is lost, by the discovery on the exterior wall head-course of the north clerestory wall, where a series of shields forms the decorative treatment. Each alternate shield bears in relief a capital letter:—

W . L . S . F . Y . C . Y . Z . O . G . M . iii . j . L .

This was translated by Dr. Thomas Dickson, Register House, Edinburgh, as follows:—

Wilzame . Lord . Sinclare . Fundit . Yis . College .  
Ye . Zeir . Of . God . MCCCCL (1450).

The difference of four years between 1446 and 1450 would be accounted for in respect that four years would be required for the underbuilding.

#### COMPLETED BY FOUNDER'S SON

Sir William St. Clair, the Founder, died in 1484, and was buried in the still unfinished Chapel. His son and successor in the Barony of Rosslyn, Sir Oliver St. Clair, did not carry out in full detail his father's original design in completing the building. He was not so keen on building Churches, and preferred other ways of employing his riches. "He finished the Chapel, as appears by his escutcheon in the vault" ("Genealogie," p. 107), roofing in the Choir with its stone vault. The condition of the Carvings inside, and the fragmentary state of the cornice over the Lady Chapel show evident marks of incompleteness. The foliated string course, for instance, going round the building banding the vaulting shafts, going over the top of the doors and under the windows and climbing over a piscina in the south-east Chapel rising nearly to the vaulting, stops mysteriously in the west bays. The incised slab over the Founder's grave between pillars Nos. 15 and 16 is an unworthy specimen of

medieval work. It represents a Knight in armour, with hands uplifted and joined as if in prayer, with a greyhound at his feet, and on each side of the head is a small shield with a lion rampant. A shield bearing his Arms with those of his first wife appears on the north wall pillar opposite No. 16.

The foundations for the whole building had been laid, and the east walls of the north and south transepts built, with all preparations in the way of carvings; also an altar with piscina and aumbry in each transept. The openings into the nave and transepts were, however, solidly built up, so that the Chapel could at once be used for service. The foundations of the nave which extended about ninety-one feet to the west, were dug up at the beginning of last century.

“Had the entire project been carried out, it would have formed a unique composition in this country” (John Watson, F.R.I.B.A., *Trans. Edin. Arch. Assn.*, vol. IX, 1928). “All other eccentricities of construction are trivial in importance as they are small in scale, compared with the proposed vaulting of the nave. The eastern wall of the transept is complete, and it shows that the nave was to have been an enormous barrel vault embracing quire, centre and aisles, and rising to a far greater height . . . it was planned to discard the usual Scottish tradition of treating the transept roofs as separate units, opening by massive arches with gables above them, and to have the transept vaults break into the central one, while not rising nearly so high . . . any steeple would have projected from the north-west corner.” (Ian C. Hannah, “*Story of Scotland in Stone*,” 1934.)

#### ENDOWMENTS LOST

Included among the Endowments were Churchlands of Pentland (Old Pentland); four acres of meadow; manse, houses, buildings, and eight souns grass at that town; sixteen souns in Pentland Hills called the Kipps; also land near the Chapel for dwelling houses and gardens for the Provost and



Prebendaries, which may be represented in the ruined foundations—traditionally known as “the Provost’s house” on the left of the road between Rosslyn Chapel and the Castle. All the revenues and endowments by the Founder and others, passed away at the Reformation. In 1571 (Feb. 28), forty-eight years after the last endowment, we find the Provost and Prebendaries resigning, as by force and violence, all and everyone of the several donations into secular hands inalienably; and withal complaining that, for many years before, their revenues had been violently detained from them. To this Charter the Seal of the Chapter of the Collegiate Church was appended, being “St. Matthew in a Kirk, red upon white wax ; as also the Seal of the then Sir William St. Clair of Roslin, being a ragged cross, red upon white wax.” The Charter is signed by John Robeson, Provost of Rosling, John How, Vicar of Pentland; Henry Sinclair, Prebendary, and W. Sinclair of Roslin, Knight. (Hay, vol. II, p. 350.)

#### OLD PENTLAND

This was an important centre in its day. The Church of Pentland was granted to the monks of Holyrood at the time of the Abbey’s foundation, confirmed in 1240; became an independent Rectory before the death of Alexander III, and from the 14th to the 16th century was under the patronage of the St. Clairs, so that it passed through all the varying forms of faith and church government inherent in the Scottish tradition—Roman Catholic, Episcopalian and Presbyterian. For twenty years prior to 1592 there was a struggle in the country between Presbyterianism and Episcopacy, and the former was definitely established in 1592. A period of Episcopacy lasted from 1610 to 1638, and again from 1661 to 1689. In 1688 came The Revolution, the end of Episcopacy and the establishment of Presbyterianism in July, 1689. There was a house in Pentland which was called the “Provost’s house” inhabited by Henry Sinclair, who held the office or title of “Provost of Roslin.” In

1601 he granted a Charter of the Church lands to Sir William St. Clair. Among Pre-Reformation ministers of Pentland was Sir John Sinclair, fourth son of Sir Oliver, who completed Rosslyn Chapel, afterwards Dean of Restalrig, Bishop of Brechin, Lord President of the Court of Session, and solemnized the marriage of Queen Mary and Darnley at Holyrood in 1565. Sir John Robeson was the last incumbent of Pentland. The Parish ceased to exist after the Reformation, and was united to Lasswade. Pentland was also the birth-place of the Reformed Presbyterian Church ("The Cameronians") (1681), who refused to have any part in the "Revolution Settlement" and maintained their claim to be "the historical representatives of the Covenanted Church of Scotland." They removed from Pentland to Loanhead in 1792, where they are still represented. At the time of the "Pentland Rising" (1666) Father Hay was about five years old, and in "The Genealogie of the Hayes of Tweeddale" which he completed about 1700, we learn that his father assisted in the Battle against the Covenanters—"some humorous and factious people," he writes, "ingaged in rebellious courses, and came to Pentland in arms; they were discomfited by General Dalziel, his father was assistant against the rebels, and he himself remembers that, in coming home, to have seen several balls fall out of his boots in pulling them off. Whatsomever was the pretext of such an irregular proceeding, we can say that we are commanded to obey Kings as well good as evil." The Covenanters thought otherwise, and in due course their cause was victorious. Only the foundations of the old Pentland Church now remain. In 1815 the gable ends of the old Church were still standing "with trees growing in the aisles."

#### OF WHAT DOES THE CHAPEL CONSIST?

A Choir of five bays, with north, south and east aisles, and a Retro-Choir, or Lady Chapel. The walls of the aisles are strengthened at each bay by massive



buttresses, surmounted by richly ornamented conical and square pinnacles, embellished with crockets, from which also rise the flying buttresses, which sustain the thrust of the roof vault at the clerestory walls. The walls are  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick. On the unfinished west gable is a square Bell-cot for two bells.

Two doors lead into the Chapel—north and south, differing in design. Each is square-headed, with circular arch thrown over on the outside between the two adjacent buttresses. Traditionally, the north door is the "Bachelors' Door." Perhaps the two doors had something to do with the separation of the sexes. The Holy Water font at the south door, however, indicates it as the entrance door, the north entrance having no such feature, and worshippers at the Chapel altars would retire by it. The form or bench along the ambulatory walls indicates crowded congregations on Saints' and Feast Days, although it is suggested that the expression "the weak to the wall," meant that only those unable to stand sat on this bench.

Let us enter by the north door. Immediately we are conscious of the soft dim religious light, which pervades the building from the stained-glass windows, and the richness of the colouring sweetened by the mellowing influence of time—

"The high enbowèd roof,  
With antique pillars, massy-proof,  
And storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light.

"There let the pealing organ blow,  
To the full-voiced quire below,  
In service high, and anthems clear,  
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes."

"Il Penseroso"—Milton.

The inside dimensions are: Choir, 48 ft. 4 ins. by 17 ft.  $10\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Height 33 ft. 6 ins. to the springing of the arched roof; including aisles and Lady Chapel,

total length 69 ft. 8 ins.; breadth 35ft., height 41 ft. 9 ins. to the apex of roof.

The main part of the building—the Choir, stands upon 13 shafted or beaded pillars with carved Capitals, 8 ft. in height, forming an arcade of 12 pointed arches, 5 on each side and 2 under the east gable. Three other pillars divide the east aisle from the Lady Chapel. Over the arcade is an ornamental string course, above which are the clerestory windows of single lights, without tracery, five on each side. The east window which is of two lights, is on the same level as the clerestory windows, but larger and much higher, being in the gable. The aisles and Lady Chapel have almost flat roofs reaching just above the arches, so that there is no triforium.

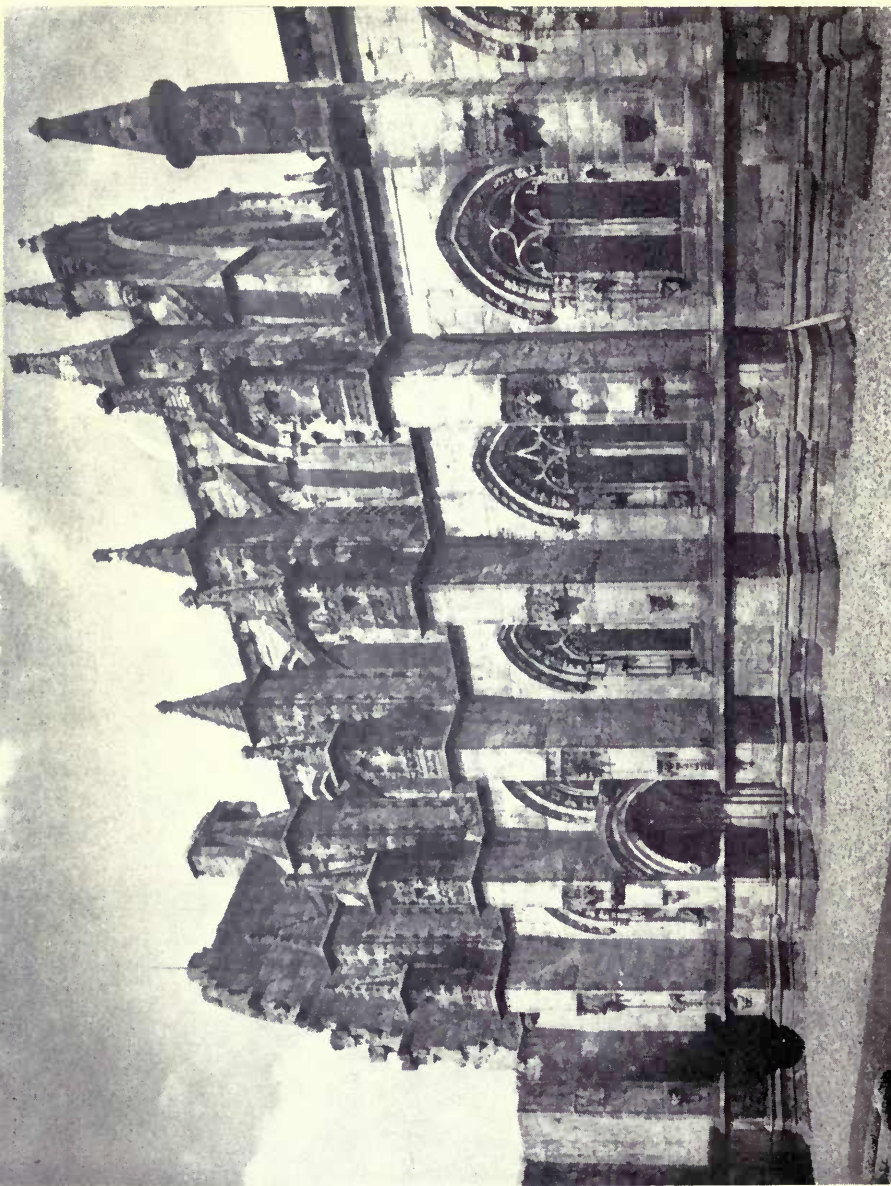
One peculiarity of the Chapel is the “straight arches” (as they are erroneously called) of the aisles; *i.e.*, instead of ordinary arches, a lintel or architrave, consisting of 7 or 9 stones, connects each pillar with the outside wall. These are said to be hollowed out on the inside, and bear nothing more than their own weight, as there are “saving arches” above them. In some instances these are quite visible, others are hidden by the moulded cope of the lintels. Each bay of the aisles is vaulted from east to west, thus giving height to the windows on the north and south.

The Lady Chapel extends the whole width of the Chapel, and is 7 ft. 6 ins. wide and 15 ft. high, the floor being elevated one step above that of the Choir. The roof is groined in simplest manner, but with a marvellous profusion of detailed ornamentation. The diagonal ribs meet in a keystone, which forms a pendant, 2 ft. long—(see “Carvings”). All the lower windows are of two lights, divided by a shafted mullion with carved caps and bases, the splays being fitted with curiously carved brackets to support figures (see “Carvings”). The roof of the Choir is barrel vaulted, of stone, in five compartments, divided by four elaborate carved ribs in different designs, each compartment being powdered in diaper work, with stars, roses, square and circular *paterae* ornaments, full of symbolism requiring interpretation through



ENRICHED VAULTING OF QUIRE





SOUTH ELEVATION, LOOKING WEST

medieval thought. Bright sunshine is essential to the full appreciation of its rich beauty and exquisite mellow colouring.

Between the clerestory windows is a double row of brackets for statues, the canopy of the lower forming the base of that above. There are twelve on each side. Over the central pillar under the East window is a niche of more elaborate design. Here, probably stood a figure of the Blessed Virgin, with the Infant Saviour in her arms. Figures of the Apostles also occupied other brackets up to the Reformation.

There were four altars in the Lady Chapel, dedicated 5th Feb., 1523 ("Edinburgh Magazine" article), to St. Matthew, the Blessed Virgin, St. Andrew, and St. Peter (beginning at the north end). The last was sometimes called the "High Altar," as it stood on a high platform to give headway to the stair leading to the Crypt. The principal altar, however, stood in front of the central pillar, under the figure of the Blessed Virgin, where the present altar now stands. All these figures were destroyed at the time of, and subsequent to, the Reformation, and are mentioned in the Dalkeith Presbytery Records. Carved and decorated fragments are still being found from time to time, and are preserved in the Crypt.

#### ALTARS CAST DOWN—CEASES TO BE HOUSE OF PRAYER

From about 1592 when the altars were demolished, it would almost appear that the Chapel ceased to be used as a house of prayer, and it began to fall into disrepair. After the Battle of Dunbar 1650, Cromwell's troops, under General Monk (who besieged and battered down Rosslyn Castle) stabled their horses in the Chapel. It again suffered at the hands of a mob on the night of 11th December, 1688, when the Castle was pillaged. Father Hay says, "I lost several books of note, amongst others, the original manuscript of Adam Abel, which I had of my Lord Tarbat, then Register." Adam Abel, a famous writer, lived and

died a Gray-Friar in Jedburgh Monastery. The book was an English abridgement of his Latin History of Scotland from early times to 1536, entitled "Rota Temporum." (Proc. Soc. Ant., Jan. 8, 1877.)

And so things continued till 1736, when the estate passed into the hands of General St. Clair, who caused the windows to be glazed—before this there were shutters on the outside, the iron hinges remain. He also put new flagstones on the roof and floor, and built the high boundary wall round the cemetery.

As showing the condition of the Chapel at this time, it is interesting to note what Dorothy Wordsworth, who visited the Chapel along with the poet, 17th September, 1803, entered in her Diary of their Scottish tour:—

“Went to see the inside of the Chapel of Rosslyn which is kept locked up, and so preserved from the injuries it might otherwise receive from idle boys; but as nothing is done to keep it together, it must in the end, fall. The architecture within is exquisitely beautiful.”

Queen Victoria who visited the Chapel on 14th September, 1842, with Prince Albert and the Duchess of Buccleuch, is said to have been “so much impressed with the beauty of the building, that she expressed a desire that so unique a gem should be preserved to the country.”

King Edward, George V, Queen Mary, George VI, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, have all visited the Chapel from time to time, as well as other Kings and Queens, Rulers, Indian Princes, Prime Ministers and notabilities in every sphere of British, Colonial, Continental and Foreign influence. Every corner of the earth is represented in the pages of the Visitors' Books. A Portuguese stood waiting at the gate for admission, one winter morning recently, before it was daylight.

#### THE CHAPEL RESTORED

Much was done towards the preservation of the venerable and sacred building by Sir Alexander



Wedderburn, St. Clair, who became Lord High Chancellor of England, and was created Lord Loughborough of Loughborough in Surrey, and First Earl of Rosslyn (1801).

In 1861 it was agreed by James Alexander St. Clair Erskine, Third Earl of Rosslyn, who married Frances Wemyss, daughter of Lieut.-General Wemyss of Wemyss Castle, Fife, that Sunday Services should again be held, and David Bryce, R.S.A., Architect, Edinburgh, was instructed in the desire for restoration, which to His Lordship was a "work and labour of love," for he spared no time, trouble or money to further the work of renewing and retouching the carvings of the Lady Chapel, etc. The flags were relaid in the Crypt, and the altar there set up. The Chapel was re-opened and re-dedicated on Easter Tuesday, 22nd April, 1862, when the Bishop of Brechin preached from the text—"Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth" (Ps. xxvi, 8). The Rev. R. Cole, then resident Military Chaplain at Greenlaw Barracks, was constituted by the Earl his "Domestic Chaplain" in consideration of the active part he took, along with Lady Helen Wedderburn of Rosebank, daughter of Walter, Seventh Earl of Airlie, in instituting the renewal of worship in the Chapel.

The Earl's son and successor—Francis Robert St. Clair Erskine, Fourth Earl of Rosslyn, who was appointed by Queen Victoria Captain of the Gentlemen-at-Arms, was keenly interested in the Chapel, and with loving thought and generous gifts continued his father's work. He built the apse to serve as a Baptistry in 1880-1, with organ chamber above, thus opening up the lofty arch, which was intended to form the "Rood-loft." This and the entrance into the Baptistry have been filled with handsome oak tracery, adding greatly to the interior beauty of the Chapel at the west end.

#### THE CRYPT

A stair, originally arched over, at the south-east corner, leads by four plus twenty steps to a smaller

Chapel or Crypt, 15 ft. high, 14 ft. broad and 36 ft. long, which has also served as a Sacristy and Vestry. It contains an East window looking out to the Esk woodlands, an altar, piscina, and aumbry used for Divine Service while the Chapel was in building, as it is of older date than the Chapel.

On a corbel to the north of the window is a Shield with the Rosslyn Arms—the engrailed cross: another on the south, couped Orkney and Rosslyn; and the second part coupé of three, Douglas and Touraine; in the first, three stars; in the second, three fleurs-de-lis; in the third, a heart, bearing the Arms of Lady Elizabeth Douglas, formerly Countess of Buchan (the Earl fell in the Battle of Verneuil, France, fighting in the Scots Army under the Earl of Douglas, her father, who was also slain, 17th August, 1424), first wife of the Founder. Her father, Fourth Earl of Douglas and First Duke of Touraine, built the gem of Lincluden 1424, and she would naturally be greatly interested in the building of Rosslyn Chapel. Like her mother, who was a daughter of Robert III and his Queen Annabella, and sister of James I, she was of a refined and pious nature. She died before the completion of the Chapel (1452). His second wife was of Royal Scottish blood—Lady Marjorie, daughter of Alexander Sutherland of Dunbeath, Caithness (Charter of Dunbeath, 24th October, 1429), her great grandmother Jane Bruce, being younger daughter of King Robert Bruce.

There is a vaulted stone roof and the four ribs form a series of engrailed crosses—crosses with a border composed of little semi-circular indents, the arms of which rest on carved corbels, one of which contains a female figure with a rosary. The Crypt is otherwise bare of ornamentation. It contains a fireplace, wall cupboards, two doors leading to other outside buildings, and was probably used as a custodier's or living room. There are some scratched working drawings on the walls, perhaps those of craftsmen building the Chapel; and drawing of a pinnacle.

This Crypt or Sacristy may have had some connection with the Castle, and that some previous building

existed on the site seems probable, for in "Theatrum Scotiae" (Slezer) we read that three Earls or Princes of Orkney, and nine Barons of Rosslyn, are buried here. The founder of the Chapel was the third and last Earl, and probably the first Earl and certainly the second was buried here, thirty years before the Chapel was begun in 1446.

Visitors ascending from the Crypt should pause a few steps before reaching the upper Chapel whence we get a good view of the vista of "straight arches" in the south aisle. The roof of the Lady Chapel is best seen from the third step from the top.

### COATS OF ARMS

Two are described above. Over the capital of the central pillar (East Gable) is a shield bearing Orkney, Caithness, Rosslyn. This fixes the date between 1455, when the Founder received the Earldom of Caithness from James III, and 1476, when he resigned it in favour of his third son William, founder of the Caithness family, who fell at Flodden. Opposite Pillar 16 (see "Carvings") on the north wall pillar is another Coat of Arms previously mentioned. The engrailed cross—the St. Clair Arms, is to be seen, not only on the roof of the Crypt as noted above, but also on the roof of the aisles, in the window tracery, and elsewhere.

A monument to the great grandson of the Founder, George, fourth Earl of Caithness (died 1582) stands against the wall in the north-west corner of the Chapel. It bears the family Coat of Arms, and the motto—"Commit they verk to God." On the top of the tomb is a pineapple.

### THE VAULTS

The entrance to the burial place of "the lordly owners of the Castle, the proud St. Clairs," is under a slab between Pillars 14 and 15. It gives a hollow

sound when tapped. Built of polished ashlar, the Vaults are in two compartments, separated by a wall down the centre. Sir Walter Scott says in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel":

" There are twenty of Rosslyn's Barons bold  
Lie buried within that proud Chapelle.

" And each St. Clair was buried there,  
With candle, with book, and with knell."

Sir William, who was interred in the Chapel on the day of the Battle of Dunbar (3rd September, 1650), was the last to be buried in armour, in accordance with the prevailing custom, all the earlier ones being so buried.

The first to be buried in a coffin was Sir James St. Clair, stepfather of Father Hay. The family suffered much for their adhesion to the Crown, and especially to Mary, Queen Dowager of James V, Queen Mary of Scotland, and Charles II. The burial in this fashion was against the sentiments of the King, James VII, then in Scotland, but Father Hay tells us that the widow thought it beggarly to be buried in armour, and the great expense she was at in burying her husband occasioned the Sumptuary Acts to restrict within reasonable bounds the expenses incurred at burials, baptisms, etc.

The second and third Earls of Rosslyn, their Countesses, and James Alexander George, Lord Loughborough, born 1830 died 1851, are buried in the Lady Chapel.

#### SIR WALTER SCOTT ON THE LAST OF THE ST. CLAIRS, THE GRAND MASTER MASON

The last to be buried in the vaults was Sir William, the last heir male of the Rosslyn branch of the St. Clairs, who died in 1778, at the age of 78, the last to hold the office of Hereditary Grand Master of the Order of Freemasonry in Scotland, which he resigned



into the hands of the Scottish Lodges in 1736, an event which led to the formation of the Grand Lodges of Scotland. At the meeting in Edinburgh, on St. Andrew's Day, 1736, Sir William was appointed the first Grand Master Mason of Scotland, after being initiated in the summer of that year in Canongate-Kilwinning Lodge, whose chapel contains a full-length portrait of the youthful Sir William. He signs in the books of the Lodge "Wm. St. Clair." The mallet of the Master of this Lodge, his symbol of office, a real working mason's mallet with chisel indentations, is said to have been found built into the walls of Rosslyn Chapel, when alterations were being made, and presented to the Lodge in 1736, and is so entered, I am informed, in the Inventories of the Lodge property. Rosslyn Chapel contains twenty-two Mason's marks, detailed in Wilson's "Archaeology of Scotland," p. 640. The privilege of Grand Master is said to have been hereditary in the family since the time of James II (1437-1460) who first granted it, and in whom Sir William found a congenial friend, but dubiety exists, although two Charters were granted by the Masons to Sir William in 1630 homologating the hereditary privilege, and stating that the original documents had been destroyed by fire in Roslin Castle ("Genealogie," p. 157-163). Four hundred members of Edinburgh Lodges attended the funeral.

The Barons of Rosslyn held their principal annual meetings at Kilwinning. The ecclesiastical fraternities—the Benedictine Order as at Dunfermline, the Cistercian Order which was supposed to have a monastery at Newhall, Carlops—"Call of the Pentlands," ch. VI), and others, were large employers of labour, and had many skilled builders and architectural craftsmen during the 13th and 14th centuries under their control, but they were largely superseded by the whole Masons of Christendom forming a Society which was held together by certain oaths and observances, and working upon ecclesiastical architecture throughout Europe, which they advanced to high perfection. Such were employed at Rosslyn in the 15th century, and while the latter were often inclined

to be more free and coarsely humorous in their form of art, as at Trinity College ("Contemporary History," p. 43) there is little of this levity in the Rosslyn carvings, which probably had the Founder's—the Grand Master Mason's—own supervision. Nevertheless, there are many strange and amusing things that you will see if you are painstaking in your search, and use a little imagination. In the south-east corner, over the 'Prentice Pillar is the representation of a "one-man band," and above Pillar 5, an eager little Imp holding on with claws, peering down on the priest by the altar; and another intriguing Imp above Pillar 15, something similar to the Lincoln Imp, quizzically looking down on the assembled congregation. On a corbel outside, against an eastern buttress there is a fox dressed as a Friar preaching to a congregation of geese. These add to the variety, although Saint Bernard and others deprecated such levity in ecclesiastical fabrics.

Of this Sir William, Sir Walter Scott who knew him as a genuine Scottish laird of the old stamp, wrote:—

"The last Rosslyn (for he was universally known by his patrimonial designation) was a man considerably over six feet, with dark grey locks, a form upright, but gracefully so, thin-flanked and broad-shouldered, built, it would seem, for the business of the war or chase, a noble eye of chastened pride and undoubted authority, and features handsome and striking in their general effect, though somewhat harsh and exaggerated when considered in detail. His complexion was dark and grizzled, and as we schoolboys, who crowded to see him perform feats of strength and skill in the old Scottish games of golf and archery, used to think and say amongst ourselves, the whole figure resembled the famous founder of the Douglas race, pointed out, it is pretended, to the Scottish monarch on a conquered field of battle, as the man whose arm had achieved the victory, by the expressive words SHOLTO DHOUGLAS—'behold the dark grey man.' In all the manly sports which require strength and dexterity, Rosslyn was unrivalled; but his particular delight was in archery." (Scott's Prose

works, vol. III, p. 369). He was a member of the Royal Company of Archers, the King's Bodyguard for Scotland.

### “THE LORDLY LINE OF HIGH ST. CLAIR”

The noble and wealthy family of the St. Clairs may be said to have reached the zenith of its ancient power in the person of Baron Sir Henry, second Prince of Orkney, who succeeded his father the first Prince, in the year 1400.

The first Prince, Henry, eldest son of Sir William St. Clair of Roslin and Isabel, daughter and co-heiress of Malise, Earl of Strathern, (Caithness and Orkney) obtained recognition from King Haakon VI of Norway and Sweden, and was installed on August 2, 1379 (“Records of the Earldom of Orkney,” p. 21), and became Lord Shetland, Lord Sinclair, Lord Chief Justice of Scotland, Admiral of the Seas, Great Protector, Keeper and Defender of the Prince of Scotland. His rank and influence were so great that he was allowed to stamp and issue coins within his dominions, make laws and remit crimes. “The tradition runs that the Smith's house at Roslin was of old the place where pieces of money were coined” (Hay's Memoirs, vol. II, p. 464). “Of the princely state maintained in the Isles by the house of St. Clair, the coins they minted, the laws they passed, and the lacquays who attended their walks abroad, a full account may be read in the pages of those veracious historians, Hay and Van Bassan” (“Records of the Earldom of Orkney,” Intro., p. XLV., Scottish History Society, Second Series, vol. VII). A Sword of Honour was carried before him wherever he went: he had a Crown in his arms, and bore a Crown on his head when he constituted laws, and indeed was second only to the King. Nine of the large family which he left were daughters. A member of the St. Clair family became Bishop of Orkney in 1383 (Dowden, Bishops, pp. 260-9).

The second Prince of Orkney his son, Baron of Pentland and Pentland-moor, married Egidia or Giles

Douglas, daughter of the valiant Sir William Douglas, "whose beauty did so dazzle the eyes of the beholders that they became presently astonished, and revived on admiring the same"; "she added the rays of virtue and holiness to a noble extraction, to the glory of ancestors and the splendour of her family. She was noways taken with the deceitful appearances of the goods of this world, with pleasures that delight the senses and with honours that bewitch the most part of mankind" ("Genealogie," p. 69).

Through his marriage the Prince added to his estates and honours the Lordship of Nithsdale, Wardenship of the three Border Marches, with six Baronies, and the Sheriffship of Nithsdale, with the town of Dumfries. "Robert III freed him of the Castle warde due for his lands of Rosline, 1404; Archibald, Earl of Douglas, granted him in 1407 the Barony of Herbertshire, Stirling." Father Hay describes him as "a Valiant Prince, well proportioned, of middle stature, broad-bodied, fair in face, yellow-haired, hasty and stern." His influence in the country was enormous, and he arranged marriages for his nine sisters with the Earl of Douglas, Earl of Dalhousie, Laird of Calder, Laird of Corstorphine, Earl of Errol, Laird of Drumelzier, Laird of Stirling, Laird of Maretone, Laird of Sommervail. His eldest daughter married the Earl of March, and Beatrice married James, Earl of Douglas. Father Hay adds—"He had the greatest part of the nobility in the country his Fialls, and their bonds of Manrent, including Lord Borthwick who had 'ten liberties (pounds?) of the Earn Craig yearly, pertaining to the Barony of Pentland Hills'; there were few, except Douglas and the Earl of March, but were some way bound to him; whom also he used to entertain into his house; at sundry times of the year, with their ladies and servants, as at Easter and Christmas, and other solemn feasts. He had continually in his house 300 riding gentlemen, and his Princess 55 gentlewomen, whereof 35 were ladies. He had his dainties tasted before him. He had meeting him when he went to Orkney 300 men with red scarlet gowns and coats of black velvet." He was also Lord



High Admiral of Scotland. During his minority James I, who was born in July, 1394, in the royal lodging attached to the Benedictine Monastery at Dunfermline (James I, Balfour-Melville, p. 10), was under his guardianship.

Proceeding to the French Court for protection and education in 1406, Prince James, then twelve years old, was accompanied by Sir Henry, but the Prince became seasick, "not being able to abide the smell of the waters," and they landed on the English coast, and were imprisoned by command of the English King (Henry IV), the young Prince remaining a prisoner for over eighteen years. One John Robinsone, indweller at Pentland, and tenant of Sir Henry, went to England, where his master was, and there played the fool so cunningly that without suspicion he gained entrance to the prison, and one evening conveyed his master without the gate in disguised apparel. They travelled by night, resting by day. They found great enquiry for them when they came to the Borders. Two "southerns" made at them, and laid hold of their horses, but Sir Henry knew how to use his fists, and struck one of them to the ground, where he died; the other fled "with shrieks and lamentable cries." Arriving in Scotland, Sir Henry asked his deliverer what reward he would like, but he declared he wished for no reward, but that he might go to Pentland, before he went to Rosline, and "pass three times about the Linstone (Line-stone, boundary stone?) thereof, which he did" ("Genealogie," p. 21).

This is quite a good story, and it would be a pity to spoil it. But the record of history is equally interesting: here it is. The Prince (James I) and his escort of Nobles sailed from the Bass Rock in March, 1406, on a Danzig ship loaded with a cargo of "wool, hides and wool-fells of the growth of Scotland" (was this the cause of the Prince's nausea?). The ship was captured off Flamborough Head by pirates or privateers, who were rewarded by King Henry with the gift of the ship's cargo, Sir Henry protesting, but in vain. The heir to the Scottish throne was sent to the Tower, and remained in nominal captivity till 1424, when he

returned to Scotland with a Queen, Joan Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, maternally related to Richard II. The poetical version of the courtship in the "Kingis Quair" (Book) is probably historically correct, and their married life was happy (James I, Balfour-Melville, p. 94). Sir Henry set out for home in September, 1407, leaving hostages in his stead, under "safe conduct, until Christmas, with 12 servants horse or foot, and returning from thence by that date, as he has made security to the King by writing obligatory, sealed with his seal, that he will surrender his body within the Castle of Durham." Safe conduct was also granted to his brother, John de Sancto Claro. Later Sir Henry apparently effected his ransome by borrowing the necessary money in Scotland (R.M.S. i. 902 shows he borrowed 300 nobles of English Money from Sir John Forrester of Corstorphine before the end of December, 1407, "Balfour-Melville," p. 39). Sir Henry took part in the negotiations for the King's release. Henry IV saw to the good education of the Prince, for he loved music and learning and languages; and later, James was at the Coronation Banquet of Henry V and Catherine, and visited various parts of England with them.

Sir Henry was of generous disposition—"His house was free for all men, so that there was no indigent that were his friends but received food and raiment, no tenants sore oppressed but had sufficient to maintain them; and, in a word, he was a pattern of piety to all his posterity; for his zeal was so great that before all things, he preferred God's service, which appeared in this that he gifted the Abbey of Holyroodhouse so richly with lands sufficient to feed 7,000 sheep—the 'Back and Fore Spittals (Carlops), with the Middle and Loch Thirds and Slipperfields (West Linton), together with the tithes of Saint Katherine's church in the Hopes'." To his brother John he gifted "Kirkton, Loganhouse, Earn Craig, Easter and Wester Summer Hopes" in the Pentlands ("Genealogie," p. 24).

On his death in 1420 (Fordun, Scotichron. XV, ch. 32), he was succeeded by the third and last Prince

of Orkney, who founded the Chapel in 1446, "the last of the Orkney jarls." On the death of his father he was too young to rule the Orkney Islands, and Bishop Thomas Tulloch acted in his stead under Commission from King Erick (June 17, 1420). On March 28, 1425, the people of Orkney appealed to the Queen of "Norway, Denmark, Sweden and of the Slavs and Goths, and Duchess of Pomerania," asking that the young Earl be appointed Governor; he was installed August 9, 1434 ("Records of the Earldom of Orkney," pp. 32, 45, 48).

Following upon this, there is in the "Records" a document "Diploma of the Succession to the Earldom of Orkney," the purport of which was to establish Sir William's right to the Earldom in response to a demand by King Christian of Norway, in which the Earl gives evidence "that divers Charters, etc., were consumed by fire and lost in time of hostility and wars of certain rivals and enemies, through absence and lack of a secure house or mansion inexpugnable, where such might have been harboured. . . . But true it is and in verity we bear witness by the relation of our trustworthy predecessors that the principal and special house or mansion of the lords Earls of Orkney has been divers times burnt and reduced to nothing and wholly destroyed and the whole country spoiled and wasted by our rivals and enemies, through which depredations we firmly believe that the principal evidents, charters and divers others letters patent have been and are lost and destroyed, pertaining to and concerning the predecessors and ancestors of the said lord Earl, through default of a Castle in which the said evidence, charters and other valuables of the country might have been safely harboured." This is dated May 4, 1446 (when the Chapel was begun), but possibly 1443 (Prof. Munch, Extracts from the Bannatyne Miscellanies, vol. III, pp. 179-196 and 63-64). The Diploma was translated by Dean Thomas Guild, monk of Newbattle, 1554, from Latin into Scottish at the request of "William Santclar Barroun of Roislin, Pentland and Harberschire." This Sir William was interested in the collection of old MSS.,

and is said to have been successful in collecting a great many which had been taken out of the Monasteries at the Reformation. He once rescued a Gypsy from being hanged, as narrated on p. 65.

The first part of the Castle of Rosslyn is said to have been built about 1304 (p. 45). At the fire in the Castle in 1447 (p. 47), the Charters were said to have been saved! We have referred to the lost original Masonic documents, which were granted in the reign of James II (1437-1460), and may have been destroyed with the Charters referred to in the above Deposition by Sir William.

He became Lord Chancellor of Scotland in 1454.

In 1468 Orkney passed in mortgage to Scotland. James III having acquired the Islands of Orkney in marriage with Margaret of Denmark, the Earl of Orkney resigned his Earldom into his Sovereign's hands, and in 1471 they were annexed to the Scottish Crown by Act of Parliament, when the Earldom lands became "King's lands"—Act. Part. II, 102 (February 20, 1471-2), Sir William receiving as compensation Dysart, Ravensheugh and Ravensraig Castle in Fife, and became Earl of Caithness and First Lord Sinclair. He divided his estates during his lifetime between his three eldest sons, and the once vast possessions were scattered among the three branches of the family—the Lords St. Clair of Dysart, the St. Clairs of Rosslyn, and the Sinclairs of Caithness. Though separated, two at least of these branches became united again in the person of Henry, Eighth Lord Sinclair of Herdmanston, from whom the present Earls of Rosslyn are descended.

### EARLS OF ROSSLYN

The "Last Rosslyn" of whom Sir Walter Scott wrote, married Cordelia, daughter of Sir George Wishart, Bart., of Clifton Hall. All his family died young, except his daughter Sarah, who became his heiress. She married Sir Peter Wedderburn of Chester Hall, and their family consisted of a son,



Alexander, and a daughter, Janet, grand-daughter (on her mother's side) of Sir William the last heir male, who married Sir Henry Erskine, Fifth Baronet of Alva, and who by the death of her brother without issue became heiress to her mother and brother. The son, Alexander Wedderburn St. Clair, the Lord High Chancellor of England, Lord Loughborough, and *First Earl of Rosslyn*, who as beforementioned restored the Chapel, died in 1803, leaving the title to his nephew, who became the *Second Earl*, Sir James Alexander St. Clair Erskine, Baronet, succeeded by his son also James Alexander St. Clair Erskine, *Third Earl*.

The Chapel was restored by this Earl also, who died in 1866, and was succeeded by his second son—Francis Robert St. Clair Erskine, *Fourth Earl*, born 1833, who took so much interest in the Chapel. He was also a poet, author of volumes of Sonnets (1883) and Sonnets and Poems (1889), including "A Jubilee Lyric," written in 1887 and dedicated to Queen Victoria, and published at Her Majesty's command, entitled "Love that lasts for ever." He died at Dysart, 6th September, 1890, and was buried at his own request in the south-west corner of the Chapel grounds—the first of a long line of St. Clairs of Rosslyn buried *outside* the Chapel. Visitors will note the handsome monument to his memory, and that of his widow, in the grounds. The following "from the Sonnets" is inscribed on the monument—

" Safe, safe at last from doubt, from storm, from  
strife  
Moored in the depths of Christ's unfathomed  
grave  
With spirits of just, with dear ones lost  
And found again, this strange ineffable life  
Is Life Eternal; Death has here no place  
And they are welcome best who suffered most."

---

" We enter Life but through the gates of Death."

---

His eldest son succeeded—James Francis Harry St. Clair Erskine, *Fifth Earl*, born 1869, who died August

10, 1939, and is also buried in the grounds. He was succeeded in 1939 by his grandson Anthony Hugh Francis Harry St. Clair Erskine, born May 18, 1917, Lord Loughborough, *Sixth* and present *Earl of Rosslyn*.\*

Sir Walter Scott in the "Dirge of Rosabelle" refers to a popular tradition of the Chapel seeming all on fire at the death of any member of the family; a superstition that may be of Norwegian derivation, imported by the Earls of Orkney. The Sagas tell of the tomb-fires of the North:—

" O'er Rosslyn all that dreary night,  
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;  
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,  
And redder than the bright moon-beam.

" It glared on Rosslyn's castled rock,  
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;  
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,  
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

" Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,  
Where Rosslyn's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,  
Each Baron, for a sable shroud  
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

" Seem'd all on fire within, around,  
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;  
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,  
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

" Blazed battlement and pinnet high,  
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—  
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh  
The lordly line of high St. Clair."

\* A St. Clair family name from early times.

## CARVINGS

**R**OSSLYN CHAPEL has been described as "one of those architectural wonders whose intricate beauties and peculiarities extort our admiration, while they baffle description." Elegance and variety are its chief characteristics; and as an instance of the variety as well as the beauty and elegance it may be mentioned that there are over thirteen different kinds of arches; while endless diversity marks the prolific ornamentations of the architraves, the capitals of pillars, window traceries, crocketed pinnacles, flying buttresses, and the five compartments of the vaulted roof. Canopied niches and bracket pedestals adorn both the exterior and the interior of the Chapel.

"It riots in ornamentation of an exuberance unapproached before and not reached in later days." "It is remarkable that in the lavish use of ornament the Chapel was a pioneer. While it was rising over the woods of the Esk, Brunelleschi was building his dome at Florence, and that earliest work of the Renaissance is comparatively plain. Not till after the Battle of Bosworth (1485) did England erect any building so richly adorned. Far from displaying the slightest Renaissance influence Rosslyn in her sculpture seems rather to face back to the past. This is certainly true of the weird animals, intertwining coils, and not very well drawn human forms that recall the tradition of the Celt, but the exuberant foliage that forms each boss and string, and band and canopy and bracket is highly individual. Projecting blocks of carving introduced at the springing of every arch seem to be unique. The foliage is natural in representing many different kinds of plants, but there are portions particularly on the architraves which are highly conventionalised. . . . Like many French Cathedrals,

the Chapel has been called a Bible in Stone. It might quite as picturesquely and far more truly be described as woods bursting into song. At first sight everything is leaves, the human forms are well concealed" (Ian C. Hannah, "Story of Scotland in Stone").

This portrayal of Nature in great abundance, at such an early date, is most noteworthy. This seems to have appealed to the Wordsworths. Dorothy wrote:—

"The stone both of the roof and walls, is sculptured with leaves and flowers, so delicately wrought that I could have admired them for hours, and the whole of their groundwork is stained by time with the softest colours. Some of those leaves and flowers were tinged perfectly green, and at one part the effect was most exquisite—three of four leaves of a small fern, resembling that which we called Adder's Tongue grew round a cluster of them at the top of a pillar, and the natural product and the artificial were so intermingled that at first it was not easy to distinguish the living plant from the other, they being of an equally determined green, though the fern was of a deeper shade."

Wordsworth's Sonnet "Composed in Rosslyn Chapel" also deals with this—

"From what bank  
Came those live herbs? by what hand were they sown  
Where dew falls not, where rain-drops seem un-  
known?  
Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche  
Share with their sculptured fellows, that, green-  
grown,  
Copy their beauty more and more, and preach,  
Though mute, of all things blending into one."

A knowledge of botany is an advantage to a fuller comprehension of the foliage; although even the uninitiated may discern the harts-tongue ferns, curly-kail, trefoil, oak and cactus leaves, flowers, and Indian corn, all carved with masterly skill and great beauty. Roses, too, are everywhere, and Sir Walter, always



exact and descriptive in adjectives and epithets, speaks of—

“Every rose-carved buttress fair.”

Like so much else, probably all these were intended to have symbolic meaning—the fern signifying sincerity; the oak, honour; trefoil, constancy.

### LIKE THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM BIBLE STORY IN STONE

Like Solomon's Temple, for which David his father, made such ample provision, the “Collegiate Church of St. Matthew” was intended to be “exceeding magnifical, of fame and glory throughout all countries” (1 Chron. 22, 5), and such it has proved to be through the centuries. Much there is, doubtless, that the critic would condemn, but there is much to admire. We do not know who the architect was. Perhaps Sir William was himself the chief designer and architect, seeing he possessed much skill in the masonic art, was described by a contemporary as a “patron of the Arts,” and was devoted to building in an age in which it became one of the most favourite pastimes, and an engrossing pursuit of Scottish Kings. He may of course have given general instructions and left much to his skilled craftsmen and artificers and their subordinates, so that each workman exercised ingenuity in his desire to excel “in cunynge device and quaint imagerie”; or he may have supervised as a Grand Master Mason much of his craftsmen's sculptures, to ensure that they conformed to his desire. At any rate, if it was his desire that the church should testify to the Scripture story, speaking in the language of allegory, which once comprehended made the meaning plain—although the Miracle Plays in the earlier church nearer the Castle would be more easily understood by the less educated portion of the community, how noble was his purpose.

We must remember again the period when this work was begun—in the middle of the 15th century—before

the invention of printing, when there would be but few written copies of the Scriptures, scarce and expensive—and a hundred years before the Reformation. What the Chapel was like originally we cannot tell; but the images, legends of the Saints, coloured decorations, richly embroidered hangings, altar treasures, and chanting priests in procession with their shrines, censers, crosses and banners—all have gone. It was no doubt the intention of the pious Founder to provide in the Carvings through the entire church, religious instruction through the eye, spirit giving value to material nature.

And this gives Rosslyn Chapel another claim to be unrivalled, for in what other British or Continental chapel or cathedral will be found portrayed in stone carving, the Gospel story and its teaching in allegory? In the following pages we shall go over the various detailed figures, and at the end we shall be able to see how much of the Bible story is there enshrined, and can be summarised, as was done by the late Chaplain to the Earl, as follows—Passing through the Lady Chapel from north to south we see the story of man's Fall and Expulsion from Eden; The Dance of Death—Death's constant presence and power, a subject to be met with mostly in pictures all over Europe (the Dominican Cloister of Great Bâle, for instance) (see p. 31a). Over the Crypt stair is a figure representing Death itself, as we shall detail later; The Birth of Christ; The Sacrifice of Isaac; The Victory of Truth; The Contrast between Virtue and Vice; The Conception or Annunciation; The Presentation of Christ in the Temple; Jesus working as a Carpenter at the Bench; The Prodigal feeding Swine—the degradation of Sin; The Crucifixion and Descent from the Cross; The Resurrection and Rolling away of the Stone from the Sepulchre; The Conquest over Death and Hades; and to conclude, our Lord seated in Glory, with Kings lying prostrate before His presence.

All this makes Rosslyn stand out as a unique shrine, even although it may be incomplete. Not that all the carving is scriptural; there is much that is

human, grotesque, amusing, humorous, and much to excite wonder and admiration. But then, there is a time for all things, and there is laughter in Nature, it runs through all Creation, and in the fairyland of Fancy and Joy is the note of the Divine laughter God is the God of Joy and Laughter; and how numerous are the examples in the Gospels of the Saviour's homeliness and humour, just because He understood what was in Man, and the beneficent power of a sense of Humour in daily life.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

On the north side, beside the strange gargoyles that keep away evil spirits, over the porch, there is to the right a man with pointed ears, bound round with ropes; a man with a stick between his arms and legs; a warrior on horseback. On the left of the door is a representation of the ancient nursery rhyme—a fox carrying off a goose, and the farmer's wife in pursuit; and many others. In the opposite corner of the window for instance is a cherub playing a musical instrument. The two buttresses flanking the door call for attention; that on the east side is enriched by a canopied niche, the pinnacle of which is highly ornamented with crockets and tracery, and is supported by a column pedestal. The west buttress has a canopy equal in beauty of sculpture to the other, but without a pinnacle, and supported by a bracket pedestal under which is a small figure in the act of doing penance. Above the door is the small window in the form of a circular triangle, lighting part of the north aisle, both sides of which are boldly sculptured with foliage.

The south front of the building is nearly similar to the north, excepting the door which is composed of receding arches richly ornamented. In front is an arched porch, having for an abutment on each side, a cherub waving a scroll; the mouldings of the arch are ornamented at regular distances with foliage, etc. Above the door is a small window, of the form of an

equilateral spherical-triangle presenting within its perimeter three Gothic points; it is ornamented all round by a double row of foliage.

Heads and hands holding foliage appear in all sorts of places. In the unfinished west gable, at the west end, south side, at 17 on plan is a good representation of St. Christopher with the infant Saviour in his arms. On the north side (18), St. Sebastian tied to a tree by two men, with arrows sticking in the left side of the martyr. According to the legend he was condemned by the Roman Emperor Diocletian to be tied to a tree, and shot with arrows. High above these forming Capitals to Shafts, on the north side, is a representation of the Crucifixion, and on the south a group, said to represent some event in the life of Elijah, probably his being taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire—a type of the Ascension of Christ. But this is much mutilated, and difficult to make out.

#### IN THE INTERIOR

The most interesting figures are found here. Many are not easily seen, and may be passed over, unless one knows where to look for them. Indeed they are a separate study, requiring frequent visits, and careful examination, and withal—a good light to see them to advantage. Some are difficult to decipher owing to defacement, and to time's erasing hand, but in the words of Sir Daniel Wilson, Hon. Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in his day—"Notwithstanding the many descriptions and drawings which have been made of the Chapel, it is little known that there exists the remarkable series of medieval religious allegories—'The Seven Acts of Mercy'; 'The Seven Deadly Sins'; 'The Dance of Death'; the last-mentioned including at least twenty different groups and scenes—as strange a story as was ever told in stone" ("Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland," 1851, p. 630).

On entering the Choir from the west—*i.e.*, from the Nave—we are struck with the ornamented vaulted roof—stars, roses. On the right, as if guarding the



entrance, is an *angel*; on the second block, another *angel with a sword*; while near the rib is a *group of two figures*; and on the block above is another *angel*, with hands uplifted.

On the left, in the first compartment of the roof, at the lowest corner, is the *crescent moon* and a small *star*; while above is a *dove* with outspread wings—symbol of the Holy Ghost. On the third block above is a *sun*, radiated, with an *open hand* underneath.

At the apex of the roof, in the west corner, is a head with a scar on the right temple, representing perhaps that of the *Apprentice*, mentioned later. About half-way up the west wall of the Choir, on the south side (under the pedestal of the niche with statue of St. Paul), is another *Head of the Apprentice*, also with scar on right temple; while in the opposite corner is that of the *Master* who is said to have killed him. On the east of the apprentice, under the next niche, is another head, said to represent the *Mother* of the apprentice. These heads are said to have been carved by his fellow-workmen when the walls had reached that height, to symbolise the story. Similar legends pertain to other buildings, including Melrose—East Window, Lincoln, Rouen—the Rose Window.

Next comes a series of representations, commencing from the central pillar (1 in Plan) under east window. Above this pillar is a niche differing in design from the others, containing a modern figure of the *Virgin and Child*—the original figures here, as elsewhere in the Chapel, having been destroyed at the Reformation. The *Principal Altar* probably stood beneath this niche.

Behind Pillar 1 begins the series of Scriptural allegory with *The Fall of Man* and *Expulsion from Eden*. There is a tree, with two figures approaching it, and two receding from it. On the north side of this is a *huge beast*, secured by a chain collar and a cord in his mouth, with a man lying prostrate, which may represent the power and dominion of sin since the Fall. On the south side are *palm leaves*—victory over sin.

East of Pillar 1 is the *Retro-choir* or *Lady Chapel*, very rich in carving, especially the groined roof and

capitals of pillars. In the first (north) compartment, on the ribs of the roof there is a series of figures, eight inches long, graphically described as "The Dance of Death." Rising from wall corbel *A*, on side *a*, towards pendant *P*, we have nine figures—1. *An Abbot*. 2. *An Abbess*. 3. *Figure* (mutilated). 4. *Lady*, looking into mirror. 5. defaced. 6. *Bishop*. 7. *Cardinal*. 8. *Courtier*. 9. *King*.

Rising from pillar 2, on side *b*, are seven figures—1. *Ploughman*. 2. *Carpenter*. 3. *Gardener* with spade. 4. *Sportsman*. 5. *Child*. 6. *Husband and Wife*. 7. *Farmer*.

Each of above 16 figures has a skeleton beside it. Bishop Forbes in his "Tract on Rosslyn Chapel" (1774) suggests they "represent the Resurrection, by people rising out of their graves like skeletons, and improving, into proper forms placed close to the skeletons." It is more likely intended as symbolical of "The Dance of Death," a favourite Continental representation in early days.

#### "THE DANCE OF DEATH"

The Dance of Death or Danse Macabre is an allegorical representation of Death's supremacy over mankind. The earliest known pictorial example is "The Triumph of Death" by Orcagna on the walls of Campo Santo, Pisa (14th century). The same subject was pictured on the walls of the Dominican cemeteries of Bâle and Bern. Frescoes formerly existed on the walls of the Tower of London, the Cloister of St. Paul's, the archepiscopal palace of Croydon, the Hungerford Chapel at Salisbury Cathedral, the chapel at Wortley Hall, Gloucestershire, and the churches of Stratford-on-Avon, and Hexham, Northumberland. Primarily it was a dramatic performance, and in 1462 it was played before King René of Provence in a ballet, and it long survived in England in the form of the allegorical drama. The story of the Bâle representation is that while the famous Council of Bâle was sitting (1431-43) plague visited the city (1439) carrying

off nobles, cardinals, prelates. Survivors commissioned a memorial, and the result was the celebrated "Dance of Death," in which is represented in bitter satire, each grade of humanity from Pope to beggar terrorized by Death, the clever executant being reputed to be Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543).

Here at Rosslyn, however, the subject is uniquely treated not in painting or in frescoe, but *in stone*; and it was executed before Holbein the great medieval painter, who is pre-eminently associated with the subject, was born; so that the Rosslyn "Dance of Death" must be accounted one of the earliest renderings of the theme, if not the first to be executed by carving in stone.

Upon the opposite sides are *doves* with olive leaves, emblems of peace, and being in close proximity to the *Star of Bethlehem*, we have the symbolism of Man's Fall followed by Redemption, and the angelic song—"Peach on earth."

Over the Crypt stair, on the rib rising from the south-east wall corbel, at *e*, are four figures, a *Warrior*, with helmet, sword and spear; a *Monk* drinking; *Death*, crouched together, and a *Man* in a dress with wide sleeves. On the opposite rib *f*, rising from corbel on east wall, are four figures—a *Queen*, a *Lady* seated in a chair, *Another Lady* praying, and a *Warrior*. This is a similar series to that on the north compartment, and these eight figures seem to have skeletons beside them also. They are evidently incomplete, as they cover only half the rib, the remainder being foliage. They are not so easily discernible as the others just mentioned, as they are on the top of the rib near the roof, facing east.

Other compartments of the groined roof have ribs covered with foliage. The pendant *S* is interesting, having a large star on the lower surface, with eight points, called the *Star of Bethlehem*. Eight figures surround it. On the south point is the *Virgin and Child*; on her right is the *Manger*; the *Three Wise Men* of the east, each with long staff in hand; the *Angel of Death*, and other figures, all representing

Christ's birth; while on the capitals of the pillars, facing the *Star*, are twelve or thirteen figures of *Angels*, singing and playing upon instruments, including the Bagpipes, representing the "Heavenly Host" rejoicing and praising God.

All the details in the following pages are easily recognisable especially if the sunlight is good, and should be followed with the references here given.

On pillar 2 there is the figure of an *Angel* with a Book spread open, representing the proclamation of the Gospel or "Good News" announced by the "Angel of the Lord" at our Saviour's birth.

### THE 'PRENTICE PILLAR

The famous "'Prentice Pillar" is No. 4, on the south-east, close to the Crypt entrance, which like all the others in the Chapel is only eight feet high, so that the sculpture on its capital can be plainly seen. The legend appertaining to it is briefly this:—

"The master mason, having received from the founder the model of a pillar of exquisite workmanship and design, hesitated to carry it out until he had been to Rome or some foreign part and seen the original. He went. In his absence an apprentice, having dreamed that he had finished the pillar, at once set to work and carried out the design as it now stands, a perfect marvel of workmanship. The master on his return, seeing the pillar completed, instead of being delighted at the success of his pupil, was so stung with envy that he asked who dared to do it in his absence. On being told it was his apprentice, he was so inflamed with passion that he struck him with his mallet and killed him on the spot, and paid the penalty for his rash and cruel act."

Bishop Forbes in his Tract says "he had it from the best authority that has prevailed in the family of Rosslyn from father to son" that the traditionally accepted view is the correct one.

The pillar is different in design and workmanship from any of the others. It exhibits a grandeur of



design, and a delicacy of chiselling altogether inimitable, some of it like Brussels lace; and never fails to rivet the spectator with delight and astonishment.

## SCANDINAVIAN MYTHOLOGY

At the base are eight Dragons intertwined. From their mouths issue the stems of four double spirals of foliage, in *basso-rilievo*, each different from the other, which wind round the clustered column, bound to it by ropes, at a distance of eighteen inches from each other. There is "nothing but leaves"—no fruit—possibly typical of the presence of evil—the dragons, symbols of Satan, having sucked all fruitfulness out of the stems. There may be Norse influence here, as in the case of the superstition of the flaming Chapel and the tomb-fires of the North previously mentioned (p. 26), seeing that in Scandinavian mythology the dragon, Satan or the Serpent, was placed at the roots of Yggdrasil, the ash tree that bound together heaven, earth and hell, whose branches extended over the whole world and above the heavens. This would forge another link between Rosslyn and Orkney, the Chapel being founded by the Third Prince of Orkney, and either he or the 'Prentice, who may have been an Orcadian craftsman, may have inspired the idea for the base of the pillar. It is suggested that the foregoing was not a primitive Scandinavian idea but originated in the first contacts with Christianity, and so has the Christian significance of the conflict between good and evil, of which so much of the Chapel carving is symbolic.

## THE STAFFORD KNOT

Equally interesting is "The Stafford Knot" on the south side of the pillar. This emblem may have originated with Hereward the Wake, the English patriot who withstood William the Conqueror, for its earliest appearance is on a Seal in the British Museum, the property of Joan, Lady of Wake,

Hereward's descendant. She died in 1443, her nephew Humphrey, Earl of Stafford, later Duke of Buckingham, adopted the knot of rope as a family badge, and all livery, furniture, hangings, buildings, were so marked. Thornbury Castle, Gloucestershire, the Ducal residence, shows a profusion of carved "Stafford Knots." Edward, Duke of Buckingham appeared on the Field of Cloth of Gold (1520) at the head of the King's retinue with a host of his followers, all of whom wore The Stafford Knot. It is included in Stafford Borough Coat of Arms, and is the Badge of the North and South Staffordshire Regiments. Where did the 'Prentice get his knowledge of this decoration?

On the south side of the capital of the 'Prentice Pillar is a representation of *Isaac* bound, lying on the altar, and a *ram* caught in a thicket by the horns. There was, in Bishop Forbes' time, in the centre of the group, a figure of *Abraham* with hands lifted in prayer, but this seems to have disappeared.

Connecting pillars 4 and 5—on the Architrave or lintel, on the east corner, facing south, is a *King* crowned, perhaps Darius, and in the west corner, a *Man playing upon Bagpipes*—a fitting tribute to Orkney Chiefs attending the Court at Rosslyn; while immediately underneath is a man reclining asleep. This sleeping figure has aroused speculation. One suggests it represents King Darius referred to in the inscription in Lombardic letters, on the architrave connecting pillar 4 with the south wall—"Forte est vinū (vinum): fortior est Rex: fortiores sunt mulieres: sūp (super) om̄ (omnia) vincit veritas"; meaning—"Wine is strong; the King is stronger: Women are stronger: but above all Truth conquers," Esdras, ch. III., ver. iv. (This should be 1 Esdras III., 10, 11, 12). These were the sentences written as a trial of wisdom by the three youths who formed the bodyguard of King Darius. Another has suggested that the sleeping figure is under the influence of the "vinum" of the text, but his proximity to the Bagpipes might suggest that the sleeper has found his Valhalla under the influence of the pipe-music. Perhaps the craftsman was an Orcadian!

## VIRTUES AND VICES

On the architrave, extending from pillar 5 to the south wall, is represented the *Contrast between Virtue and Vice* in a panorama of nine figures each. At *a*, east side of lintel, are the *Virtues or Corporal Works of Mercy*. Beginning on the left:—

**PRELIMINARY.**—A Cardinal Bishop, with a Crozier in one hand, and Bible with two clasps in the other.

1. Helping the Needy: a Lame Man on Crutches Leading the Blind.
2. Clothing the Naked.
3. Visiting the Sick.
4. Visiting those in Prison.
5. Comforting the Fatherless and Destitute.
6. Feeding the Hungry.
7. Burying the Dead.

**THE REWARD.**—St. Peter at the Gate of Heaven, with a key in his hand, as if waiting to admit those who have practised the works of mercy.

The Vices are on the west side of the Architrave at *b*.

**PRELIMINARY.**—A Bishop with a pastoral staff in his left hand, while his hand is raised in warning. (Bishop Forbes said this figure represented Bishop Thomas Spence of Aberdeen. If so, it appears to the writer that the reason for his inclusion was probably because at the time when the craftsmen were busy carving at Rosslyn, the Bishop's name was well known in Edinburgh as the founder of "The Hospital of our Blessed Lady in Leith Wynd" for the reception and entertainment of twelve poor men. He was buried (1480) in the north aisle of Trinity College Church near his foundation in Leith Wynd).

1. Pride: A Pharisee.
2. Gluttony: A Man with a large Pitcher up to his mouth.
3. Anger: Two Men Drinking; one with hand raised as if to strike.

4. Sloth: A Careless Warrior, with child clinging to his left side (2 Tim. II, 4).
5. Luxury: A Man with Hands across his Breast, surrounded by Clusters of Grapes.
6. Avarice: A Miser with a long Purse in his hand.
7. Lust: The Sinful Lovers.

THE REWARD.—The Devil issuing out of a Monster's Mouth (Hell), and stretching out a triple hook towards the whole group.

PILLAR 6.—On capital: A Head and Two Birds.

PILLAR 7.—On capital: Group of Human Figures and Animals, much defaced and broken. On the wall pillar opposite (left of south door) is a group said to represent the *Conception*, or *Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin*, in the form of an "Aureole."

PILLAR 8.—On wall pillar opposite to No. 8 (right of south door), the *Presentation of the Infant Saviour* in the Temple; while on the capital of No. 8 is a female figure kneeling, and looking towards the scene opposite. This may be intended to represent "Anna the Prophetess" (St. Luke II, 36). On the north side are a *Lion* and a *Horse*, or perhaps *Unicorn*, which would be more symbolical typifying Christ's Incarnation, the Lion being representative of Christ's Resurrection. The figures appear to be in combat, the latter with a chain and ring hanging loosely round it.

PILLAR 9.—Group engaged as *Carpenters*. Jesus working as "*The Carpenter of Nazareth*." On the east side two men struggling on their knees; perhaps *Jacob wrestling with the Angel*. On the west, a Man fighting with a Lion—Samson or David.

PILLAR 10.—On west wall: a *crowned figure*, with sword in right hand, looking east.

Over the arch between Nos. 8 and 9, facing north, are sixteen figures, representing the *Twelve Apostles and Four Primitive Martyrs*, each with nimbus, and most of them bearing the instruments of their



martyrdom, *St. Andrew* being known by the X, and *St. Bartholomew or Nathaniel* by the fig tree under which he stands. The writers of Scriptures seem to have books in their hands.

PILLAR 11.—On west wall: *Dragons* intertwined; and underneath, an *Angel* holding a scroll, and looking east.

PILLAR 12.—This is said to depict the Prodigal feeding swine; and on the other side two *Doves* and foliage. They may represent a man struggling with a boar, and one bird feeding another.

PILLAR 13.—Three figures looking to the scene on the opposite wall pillar. Bishop Forbes and others call this the "*Mater Dolorosa*," and the Beloved Disciple looking on the Crucifixion opposite. Mr. Thompson's comment is that "there are three (not two) figures: and it may be asked, Did they stand afar off? Was it not close 'beneath the Cross of Jesus?'" He thought the figures were either Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome, or represented the three great divisions of the Human Family which witnessed the Crucifixion—Hebrew, Greek, Latin.

On one side of this pillar are two animals, one chained, the other held by a man; on the other side, two animals are struggling, bound with cords.

On the wall pillar opposite No. 13 (left of north door) is a representation of the *Crucifixion*, consisting of nine figures. There is only the Cross, and it may include the Descent from the Cross; the ladder is erected at the back, on the Saviour's left hand.

PILLAR 14.—On capital, facing north, are two figures (broken)—perhaps the *Angels* rolling away the Stone. On the other side are two beasts which may represent *Death* and *Hades* overcome by the Resurrection.

On the opposite wall pillar—plaited *Crown of Thorns*.

PILLAR 15.—On capital, facing north, an enormous *Lion's Head* with hands (Samson rending the lion). There are also a plaited Crown, an *Elephant* (Patience, Christian endurance), and a broken group. There is said to have been also the head of a serpent, but this has disappeared.

On the wall pillar opposite 15 is a shield which has been inaccurately described as “an ensign armorial, having a cross arising from the back of a beast like a dog, and something like a flag waving from the top of the cross.” It is evidently a religious emblem, the *Lamb and Pennon* in a double tressure, symbolical of “Victory through the Blood of the Lamb.” Above this, and at the end of Architrave, close to north wall, is a crowned figure playing a harp (King David?). Beside him is a Demon pulling his arm, and snatching the crown from his head. *David and his Temptations* probably.

On the east side of the Architrave is a *Dog leading a blind man*; and at the other end, on each side, is a *dragon's mouth*.

PILLAR 16.—Here was a group, but it is now destroyed; also a plaited crown.

On the wall pillar opposite is a *Shield*, supported by two men kneeling. The first and third quarters have a ship, and an engrailed cross, for Orkney and Rosslyn; the second quarter a lion passant, and the fourth a heart on a quarre, with tears on each side. Doubtless the *Arms of Sir William St. Clair when a Widower*, impaled with those of his first wife Lady Margaret Douglas. This would seem to fix the date of this portion of the Chapel between 1452 when Lady Margaret died, and the time when he married Lady Marjory Sutherland—before 1476.

The slab marking the *Burial-place of Sir William and his wife* is opposite this *Shield*, between pillars 15 and 16.

On the east side of the Architrave, extending from 16 to the north wall, there are eight figures. The Central figure is sitting upright, with hands raised in blessing or in warning; while the seven others,



LINTEL ARCADING OF SOUTH AISLE





ANGEL FIGURES PLAYING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



with crowns on their heads, including one with a harp, are lying horizontally. These have been described as the *Philistines lying dead*, opposite to what has been said to be *Samson pulling down the house of Dagon*. Mr. Thompson thinks this must be wrong. It is either our Lord seated in Glory, and addressing the "Angels of the seven Churches in Asia," he says, or what is more probable, the consummation of what was intended to be a complete series of religious subjects, viz. :—Our Blessed Lord seated in Glory, while the seven Kings are lying prostrate before Him.

On the Architrave from 16 to 2 is the figure said to represent *Samson pulling down the pillars of the house of Dagon*. But there is no end to the variety of interpretations that may be given to many of these carvings.

## CARVINGS IN THE WINDOWS

**T**HE carvings on the corbels of niches in the windows are interesting and easily followed. In the windows of the Lady Chapel they are mostly Angels, either holding books or scrolls, or a shield with a cross. Beginning on the south side windows, we have:—

*A a*—An Angel, with a scroll.

*b*—An Angel, with hands clasped in prayer.

*B a*—Figure, with mantle, holding a cup or chalice.

*b*—Figure, with a scroll.

Over the arch of this window are twelve figures representing the Twelve Apostles.

*C a*—An Angel, having a skull-cap on his head, and holding a heart before him.

*b*—Moses (with horns) holding a tablet of the Law in his right hand; in his left, the “rod that budded.”

Over the arch of this window are nine figures representing the Nine Orders of the Angelic Hierarchy, viz., Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Angels, Archangels.

*D a b*—Angels, with scrolls.

*E a*—A Warrior clad in mail, on horseback, armed with a spear; behind him, an Angel holding a cross.

*b*—Figure of a man unrolling a scroll, and a female in the attitude of prayer, with an open book in her lap.

*F a*—On the right hand an Angel, holding a cross.

*b*—Opposite is an amiable couple kneeling and looking towards the cross, while the devil is scowling as if disappointed at losing his prey:

evidently intended to teach that the way to "resist the devil" is to turn from him, and look towards the cross of Christ.

*G a*—An Angel, cross in hand, holding a scroll.

*b*—An Angel, with a scroll only.

*H a*—An Angel, with an open book.

*b*—An Angel, holding a shield with engrailed cross.

*K a*—An Angel, with a scroll.

*b*—An Angel, with a closed book in his arms.

Over the arch of this window are the Twelve Apostles, with nimbus over the head of each, corresponding to those over the opposite window in the South Aisle.

*L a*—An Angel, with a scroll.

*b*—An Angel, with hands crossed upon the breast.

## STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

**A**CCORDING to brass tablets on the window-sills of the Lady Chapel—"Ac majorem Dei gloriam : In memory of dear parents, by whom this Chapel was restored to the service of God, A.D. 1862, the stained glass windows in this Ladye Chapel were placed by Francis Robert, fourth Earl of Rosslyn, A.D. 1867." Others have been added subsequently. The six windows of double lights in the Lady Chapel have figures of the Apostles. They are as follows, beginning on the left:—

- (1) St. Peter: St. James the Greater.
- (2) St. John: St. Andrew.
- (3) St. Philip: St. Bartholomew.
- (4) St. Matthew: St. Thomas.
- (5) St. James the Less: St. Thaddeus.
- (6) St. Simon: St. Matthias.

**IN EAST AISLE—North Window:**

St. John, Baptist, with lamb standing on a book.  
St. Paul, with sword.

**South Window:**

St. Mark: St. Luke.

**IN NORTH AISLE, commencing at west end:**

- (1) The Annunciation: The Nativity.
- (2) Presentation in the Temple: Baptism of Jesus.
- (3) Sermon on the Mount: Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

**IN SOUTH AISLE:**

- (1) Miracle at Marriage Feast of Cana: Raising of Jairus's Daughter.
- (2) Christ blessing little Children: The Last Supper.
- (3) The Crucifixion: The Resurrection.



#### THE EAST WINDOW—Two lights.

Representation of the Resurrection: the three women at the sepulchre, where two angels are sitting, one with a scroll—"He is not here, but is risen." Erected "To the Glory of God—In most affectionate remembrance of his only sister, Harriet Elizabeth St. Clair, daughter of James Alexander, third Earl of Rosslyn, and wife of George Herbert, Count Munster of Derneburg in Hanover. This window was entirely restored and filled with stained glass, November, 1869, by Francis Robert, fourth Earl of Rosslyn, etc."

#### THE WEST WINDOW—Over the Organ Gallery.

Represents our Blessed Lord in Glory: His right hand raised in blessing, and His left hand holding a sceptre; supported on the left by an angel, holding a book with A A, to represent the Law; and on the right another angel holding a cup, to represent the Sacrament or Gospel.

#### FOUR CLERESTORY WINDOWS are filled with stained glass.

The centre one on the north—St. George and the Dragon. On either side is St. Maurice and St. Longinus. On the south—St. Michael.

It was intended to fill all the Clerestory Windows on the south side with Old Testament Warriors, and on the north with Christian soldiers, according to designs by Messrs. Clayton & Bell, London.

IN THE VESTRY—there is a Memorial Window dedicated in ever loving memory to Pilot Officer The Hon. Peter St. Clair Erskine and to his step-father, Wing-Commander Sir John Milbanke, by their family. The stain glass design is the work of W. Wilson, R.S.A.

Besides numerous small niches for statuettes in the window jambs, etc., there are double rows of niches between the Clerestory Windows, twelve on each side, and one over the east central pillar, for figures about four feet in height. Several of these have been filled.

At the east end, the Blessed Virgin and Child are over the Altar, with Mary of Bethany on the left, and Mary Magdalene on the right. At the west end are St. Peter on the right and St. Paul on the left.

Services (full choral) are held regularly on Sundays, and on the greater festivals, according to the rites of the Scottish Episcopal and the English Churches. Though a Private Chapel, it is open to all, as far as space will allow. The offertories are devoted to the maintenance of the services.

## CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

(Things that were happening when the Chapel was being built.)

**H**ERE let us pause for a moment to look at some of the things that were happening in Scotland and in England, for the times were not easy or the days peaceful.

The Founder, Sir William St. Clair, lived during the reigns of three Scottish Kings:—

James I (1406-1437); James II (1437-1460); James III (1460-1488). James IV was crowned at Scone in 1488 at the age of 16, the last King of Scots to be crowned there save Charles II, and fell fighting at Flodden in 1513, when "shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear, and broken was her shield." It was during his reign that printing was first introduced into Scotland by Bishop Elphinstone in 1507, the first Scottish press being that of Walter Chepman and Andrew Myllar in Edinburgh, having royal licence for printing law-books, Acts of Parliament and all other books . . . "and to sel the sammyn for competent pricis." This was thirty-one years after William Caxton had set up his printing press in England in 1476, and printed his first book—on the royal game of Chess, while Rosslyn Chapel was still being built. The first newspaper to be printed in Scotland was in 1651 when Thomas Sydserf's *Mercurius Criticus* was published to give London news to Cromwell's troops. His *Mercurius Caledonius* for the Scottish people appeared in 1660.

The nave of Aberdeen Cathedral and Rosslyn Quire were being built at the same time, but had nothing in common. Aberdeen University was founded in 1495, the first in Britain to have a Chair of Medicine. In the reign of James I, St. Andrew's

University, the first in Scotland, was founded 1411, staffed with twenty-one Doctors. In 1436 there sailed to France from Dumbarton a fleet of eleven ships, carrying 1,000 men-at-arms and 140 squires all clothed alike in handsome livery, under command of the Admiral of Scotland, Sir William St. Clair, son of Sir Henry who set out for France with the young James I when they became fellow-prisoners of Henry IV. Sir William, as representing the King, was taking the daughter of James I, Margaret, to her marriage with the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI of France, which was intended to consolidate the Franco-Scottish Alliance. Maurice Buchanan, reputed author of the Book of Pluscarden, accompanied the Dauphiness as her Treasurer. The marriage was an unhappy one, and Margaret died, after nine years of married life in France, of a broken heart, at the age of twenty (1445), a tragic figure in a tragic family, in which we see the sad spectacle of a loveless union between two children for reasons of State policy. One year after she sailed for France her father, the athletic, cultured, poet King, who loved music and the arts and was upright and energetic, had been assassinated in his royal lodgings in the Dominican priory of the Blackfriars at Perth, the city which he would fain have made the capital of his kingdom, for Scotland had then no fixed capital. The chief conspirators were brought to justice and put to death. He was not yet forty-three. He was the first Scottish King to use a sign-manual. The Battle of Agincourt was in 1415. The Anglo-French war re-opened in 1449.

James II succeeded when he was six years of age, crowned at Holyrood, and married Mary, daughter of the Duke of Gueldres, when he was eighteen. The courageous and beautiful sixteen-year-old Mary, escorted by a fleet of thirteen ships and 300 men arrived in the Firth of Forth, and after making her devotions on the Isle of May, proceeded to Holyrood, riding pillion, where she was married with great pomp on 3rd July, 1449. Twelve years later (1460) the King met his death at the siege of Roxburgh Castle in the following circumstances: During the building of Rosslyn Chapel the Wars



of the Roses were raging in England (1455-1485), when some of the most bitter and blood-stained pages of English history were written, and James took the opportunity to drive the English out of Roxburgh and Berwick. A cannon was then a novelty in Scotland. The King brought to the siege a monster gun which his father had brought from Flanders, made of bars of iron, girded into a tube with iron rings or hoops, similar to Mons Meg in Edinburgh Castle, and the King's curiosity as to how it worked cost him his life. The iron rings were too large to keep the bars quite close together, and oaken wedges were driven in between the bars and rings. The expansion caused by the discharge of the gun drove out these wedges, and one of them killed the King, called by the people "James of the Fiery Face," because of a facial red birth-mark. He was only thirty.

When Rosslyn Chapel was begun in 1446 the struggle with the Douglases was in full force, and for a time Civil War raged in Scotland from the Solway to the Moray Firth between the House of Douglas and the House of Stewart, in which almost every landowner, including the St. Clairs, had to take a side. The Border Laws, first drawn up in 1249 were renewed 200 years later. In 1454 the Douglas raised an army reputed to number 40,000 men and marched through Lanarkshire against the King (James II). For joining in this Rebellion Sir William Hamilton was made prisoner and lodged in Rosslyn Castle. This incident in Scottish history as contained in "Thomas of Auchinleck—a short Chronicle of the Reign of James II" (Thomas Thomson, 1819) is as follows:—

"In March, 1454, James cast down the castle of Inverauyne, and passed to Glasgow, and gathered the westland men, and so to Lanark and burned all Douglasdale and all Avendale, and all the Lord Hamilton's lands and herrit them, and passed to Edinburgh, and from there to the Forest with a host of Lowland men. And all who would not come he took their goods and burnt their places. And all this time the Lord Hamilton was in England to get help, and could get none, but with the Douglas.

The King laid siege to Abercorn (a Douglas stronghold); and within seven days Lord Hamilton came to him at Abercorn and put his lands and goods in the King's will purely and simply. And the King received him to grace, and sent him with the Earl of Orkney, then Chancellor of Scotland, to remain in warde in the Castell of Roslyne, at the King's will."

The Earl of Angus, head of the younger branch of the House of Douglas, led the royal army, and many Border families deserted the elder branch and joined Angus, called the Red Douglas, because of the colour of his hair. Angus met and defeated his kinsman the Black Douglas at Arkinholm in Dumfriesshire in 1454. He fled to England; his estates were forfeited; and it was said "The Red Douglas hath put down the Black Douglas."

Glasgow University was founded during the reign of James II in 1450: Edinburgh University was not founded until 1583. During his reign James grew in favour, was loved by the commons, and trusted by the church. Both Crown and Scotland were stronger than for many years. Trade with the Baltic, Germany, France, was fostered, and there was much beneficial legislation in law, hospitals, weights and measures, agriculture, muirburn, wild birds' protection. Football and golf were "cryit downe" and wapinschaws and archery encouraged; increasing prosperity was reflected in architecture and building of religious and secular edifices, and there was an acknowledgment of God in all the King's progress and prosperity.

While the Chapel was being built Sir William was not infrequently away from home. His duties as Earl of Orkney necessitated his presence in the North. Indeed on 29th February, 1460, the Local Orkney authorities wrote to King Christian of Norway excusing the Earl for his non-attendance at the Norwegian Court on the ground that he was engaged defending the islands against the Earl of Ross, Lord of the Isles. "We know no defence after God," they wrote, "but your Highness, unless our so gracious and noble Prince, William, Earl of Orkney, who for our

defence has laid out himself and his in our deadly struggle to his no small suffering and loss, bearing the expense, labours and dangers of the war chiefly for the sake of the honour of your Excellency . . . so that he has happily kept us safe, unharmed and peaceful from these imminent dangers, without whose presence and defence we had been utterly lost and destroyed by sword and fire." Four months later the Bishop of Orkney writes to the King of Norway excusing the absence of the Earl and himself "on account of the recent invasion and devastation of Orkney by the forces of the Earl of Ross." The Earl of Orkney had been personally residing with "the most serene Prince James (James III) during his tender age, and for treating of peace between the Earl, the Prince and the Earl of Ross," when "the caterans and men of Sodor and Ireland came in great numbers with fleets and boats and burned lands, towns, houses, to the ground, and most cruelly destroyed those of both sexes and all ages with the sword, carrying off everything they could use" ("Records of the Earldom of Orkney," pp. 51-55).

James III was eight years old when his father died, and was crowned in Kelso Abbey. The early part of his reign was prosperous. He married Margaret, daughter of King Christian of Norway (1469). Orkney and Shetland were added to his Kingdom. The St. Clairs were Earls of Orkney from 1379 to 1471. In 1471 the independence of the Church of Scotland was acknowledged by the Pope. Then Louis XI, stirred up the Scots to make war on England, and in 1482 an army of 50,000 mustered on the Borough Muir, Edinburgh, and marched with the King at their head towards the Borders. At Lauder its progress was interrupted, when the King's favourites were seized and hanged over Lauder Bridge, and the King himself lodged in Edinburgh Castle. In 1488, just after the Chapel at Rosslyn was completed, warfare raged near Stirling in the effort to dethrone the King, and instal his son. Rival armies met at Sauchie Burn between Bannockburn and Stirling. But the King took fright, notwithstanding that he wore Bruce's sword—or lost

heart, and sought to flee. He mounted a spirited grey horse. The horse shied, and threw the King, who was carried into a house nearby—Beaton's Mill—and laid on a bed. He asked for a priest. A man passing by said he was a priest. He came in, and while bending over the King, he stabbed him again and again, and vanished. Thus miserably perished Scotland's third King James, at the age of thirty-six.

At the same time as Rosslyn Chapel was being built, another Collegiate Church was being built in Edinburgh. This was the original Trinity Church—"The Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity," founded by Royal Charter in 1462 at Leith Wynd, by Mary of Gueldres, the widow of James II, with which King Sir William St. Clair had always been on friendly terms. No doubt the craftsmen at Rosslyn and at Edinburgh had knowledge of each other, which may account for the fact that some of the allegorical carvings were somewhat similar, although those of Trinity Church were perhaps more flamboyant in spirit. With the exception of Holyrood it was "the finest example of decorated English Gothic architecture in the City, with many of the peculiarities of the age." The Charter contains provisions of a strange character, in Scotland at least, and illustrative of the manners of the time. "No prebendary shall be instituted unless he can read and sing plainly, count and discount. . . ." Among the gargoyles the monkey was common, and crouching monsters as corbels or brackets seemed in agony under the load they bore ("Grant's Old & New Edinburgh," vol. I, pp. 303-4). Another similarity in the two churches was that Trinity Church was only partially built, and without a nave, when the foundress died three years after the King. The Church came into the possession of the City after the Reformation, and when the railway company acquired the site in the valley under Calton Hill, the Church was re-erected on the present site in Jeffrey Street, Edinburgh.

St. Mary's Aisle, Carnwath, is not only older than Rosslyn Chapel but has a connection with the St. Clairs. Carnwath and Cowthally Castle are bound up with



the Somerville family. The second wife of Thomas, first Lord Somerville, was Lady Marie St. Clair, one of the nine daughters of the first Earl of Orkney (p. 22) whom he married in 1407. In 1424 Lady Marie persuaded her husband to rebuild Carnwath Church, with the Aisle thereof, and dedicate it to St. Mary, and the large window of the Aisle is one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in Scotland. The St. Clair Coat of Arms is on the exterior wall next the church ("Call of the Pentlands," ch. 2).

Other churches existing before Rosslyn included Bothwell (1407), Corstorphine (1429), St. Michael's, Linlithgow (1436), Crichton (1449), Seton (1450), St. Salvador's, St. Andrews (1456), Holyrood (1457), but all were incomparable with Rosslyn Chapel.

## ROSSLYN CASTLE

**R**OSSLYN has three great attractions—its wonderful Chapel, its ancient Castle, and its valley of scenic romance.

Having visited the Chapel let us now make our way to the famous Castle, which for long was one of the most important in Scotland. It stands on a rocky peninsula or promontory, surrounded on three sides by the far-famed river North Esk. We enter by a road over what was originally a deep and precipitous defile, once crossed by a drawbridge. Through this ravine a road led to the south crossing the river by a bridge. This was the road used in going to the adjoining Castles of Hawthornden, Dalkeith, Borthwick, and the Monasteries of Newbattle, Temple, Mount Lothian. This bridge has gone. The middle arch was destroyed about 1700. The abutment on the north side is still visible. The present bridge giving entrance to the Castle is fifty feet high. The first arch across the defile was built by the founder of the Chapel, Sir William St. Clair, about 1446, the second by another Sir William in 1596-7. As we pass under the archway through which kings and queens and heroes have entered the Castle, we see the ruins of the earliest part of the building—the Tower at the north-east corner.

### THE LANTERN TOWER

It was called the "Lantern" or "Lamp Tower"; probably built about 1304, shortly after the Battle of Roslin, 1302, although there may have been an earlier building. At the bottom of the high wall adjoining, *i.e.*, on the south-east, there are remains of a stair of nine steps cut in the face of the rock, probably leading to a terrace above.

## THE GREAT DUNGEON

The dungeon or "Keep," on the south-west corner, was built about 1390. Father Hay says that Sir Henry, the second Prince of Orkney, "builided the great dungeon of Rosslyn and other walls thereabout, together with parks for red and fallow deer." It was five storeys high and fifty feet long.

Sir William, the Chapel-founder, who succeeded to the estate about 1417, enlarged and strengthened the castle, and employed great numbers of workmen. "He builided the church walls of Rosline, having rounds (buttresses) with fair chambers and galleries thereon; he builided also the forework that looks north-east; he builided the bridge under the castle, a fruit orchard, and sundry office-houses." Nothing now remains of the "church walls" which presumably had to do with some early church, "galleries and fair chambers" or of the "office-houses" which would doubtless be very necessary for the accommodation of the numerous dependents whom the Prince had continually about him. Many French features were introduced in the additions to the castle—the galleries and projecting chambers and turrets, probably because Sir William and his Princess spent much time in that country. What however is most interesting is that the west wall of enceinte with buttresses or "rounds," is unique, being matched only with that of the twelfth century Château Guillard on the Seine, built by Richard I. It is also interesting to note the oyster-shells in the mortar used in building the walls. Oysters were plentiful and cheap in those days. James I bought 45,100 in 1434-35 for £8, 10s. 1d. (Exchequer Rolls, IV, 618).

There are some ruins on the steep bank below the "Great Dungeon" to the north-west; part of an arched roof is seen in two places. What these "out-works" were is unknown, perhaps the remains of the two Towers—"Robin Hood" and "Little John," which Sir William St. Clair allowed the Gypsies to inhabit, about 1559, when they came to act their plays, referred to later (p. 87).

## LIVED IN GREAT MAGNIFICENCE

In this massive, strange and picturesque Castle, upon which so much skill and time and money were spent, Sir Henry and his son and grandson Sir William would seem to have lived in almost regal magnificence. We have already spoken of the first and second Prince of Orkney (both named Sir Henry) and their high position in the national life. Of Sir William, the third Prince and Chapel-founder it is recorded that "in his house he was royally served in gold and silver vessels, in most princely manner, for the Lord Dirltone was Master of the Household, Lord Borthwick, his Cup-bearer, and Lord Fleming, his Carver," and noble Deputies to take their places when absent—the Lairds of Drumelzier, Calder and Drumlanrig. "He had his halls and his chambers richly hung with embroidered hangings." His Princess, also, Lady Elizabeth Douglas, whose various titles are given in Father Hay's manuscript, was held "in great reverence, both for her birth, and for the estate she was in, being served by 75 gentlewomen of whom 53 were the daughters of noblemen, and all of them were attired in silk and velvet, and adorned with chains of gold and other jewels. When travelling from Rosslyn to the family mansion in Edinburgh—at the foot of Blackfriar's Wynd—she was attended by 200 gentlemen on horseback, and, if after nightfall, by other 80 persons bearing torches. Indeed, 'none matched her in all the country, save the Queen's Majesty'" (Hay, vol. II, p. 234). So that it may be concluded that the princely builder of the Castle and the founder of the Chapel, lived in regal splendour. It is further recorded that in the Courtyard were six recesses, in which stood the guard horses, saddled and bridled, ready to convey messages to or from the King.

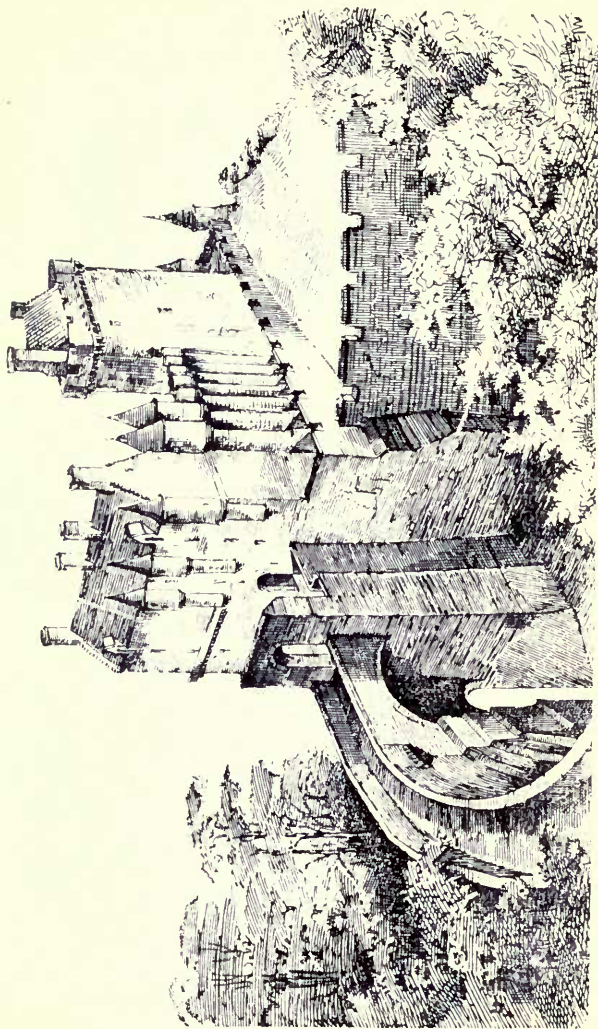
But in the course of history it sometimes happens that such magnificence of dignity and wealth has its zenith and also its decline from various causes; and it was so in the case of the "Saintclairs":—

"No more in Rosslyn's stately halls  
The joyous feast is spread,





THE THREE PILLARS OF EASTERN CHAPELS



ROSSLYN CASTLE AS IT WAS WHEN COMPLETE

Mute rests the harp on Rosslyn's walls  
Its strings are damp and dead.

“The sprightly dance of prowest chiefs  
And tissued dames is o'er,  
Yea, all the pomp of feudal times  
In Rosslyn is no more.”

(Gillespie.)

### THE CASTLE IN FLAMES

It began with a mysterious cryptic warning, and a fire. Let Father Hay speak:—

“About this time (1447—a year after the founding of the Chapel) Edward Saintclair of Draidon coming with four greyhounds and some ratches (slow hounds, used to start game) to hunt with the Prince, met a great company of rats, and among them an old blind one, with a straw in its mouth, led by the rest, whereat he greatly marvelled, not thinking what should follow; but within four days after, to wit upon the feast of Saint Leonard (6th November, 1447) the Princess, who took great delight in little dogs, caused one of the gentlewomen to go under the bed with a lighted candle to bring forth one of them that had young whelps, which she doing, and not being very attentive, set fire on the bed, whereat the fire rose and burnt the bed, and then passed to the ceiling of the great chamber in which the Princess was, whereat she, with all that werè in the dungeon, were compelled to fly. The Prince's Chaplain seeing this, and remembering all his master's writings, passed to the head of the dungeon where they were, and threw out four great trunks where they were. The news of the fire coming to the Prince's ears through the lamentable cries of the ladies and gentlewomen, and the sight thereof coming to his view in the place where he stood, to wit upon the College Hill, he was sorry for nothing but the loss of his Charters and other writings; but when the Chaplain who had saved himself by coming down the bell-rope tied to a beam, declared how his Charters

and writs were all saved, he became cheerful and went to recomfort his Princess and the ladies, desiring them to put away all sorrow; and rewarded his Chaplain very richly. Yet all this stayed him not from the building of the College, neither his liberality to the poor, but was more liberal to them than before—applying the safety of his Charters and writings to God's particular Providence." As to misfortune foretold by rats! (See Intro. to "Legend of Montrose.")

The fire damage was soon repaired, for, eight years later (1455) there was a prisoner in the Castle—Sir William Hamilton of Cadyou, for joining in the Rebellion of James, Earl of Douglas, against James II; but not for long; he was released and taken into the Royal favour (Contemporary History, pp. 59-60). That in these dungeons many captives pined cannot be doubted. Of Sir William the Chapel and Castle builder it was said that he disapproved of cruelty, such as the rack, for extorting information from prisoners.

#### THE CASTLE AGAIN BURNED

The Castle was attacked and again set on fire, in 1544, during the rupture between Henry VIII and Scotland, in the matter of the proposed marriage—"The Rough Wooing"—between the Prince of Wales (Edward VI) and Mary, the infant Queen of Scots, his grandniece. The Earl of Hertford invaded Scotland with Henry's instruction "to put all to fire and sword," landed at Granton, and prior to attacking and burning Rosslyn, he burned Edinburgh, Leith, and Craigmillar Castle. Edinburgh burned for three days and nights and the glow was seen all along the Fife and Lothian coasts, impressing upon the Scots what it meant to be at the mercy of the King of England. Jedburgh was burned and Melrose destroyed when as Duke of Somerset, he destroyed Holyrood Abbey. Fortunately the Chapel was spared; and Rosslyn Castle was again rebuilt.



## THE CASTLE VAULTS AND STAIRCASE

In 1580 Sir Edward St. Clair gave his estate to his successor Sir William St. Clair of Pentland. "He built the Vaults and Great Turnpike of Rosslyn (the large stone staircase four feet wide, leading up from the basement, through the various storeys of the Castle); he built one of the arches of the Drawbridge, a fine house near the mill (both have disappeared), and the Tower of the Dungeon where the clock was kept, with the date 1596." He also built the Great Hall adjoining the Clock Tower, and over the Vaults mentioned.

Then we learn that the rising expenses, the rebuilding of the Castle, the numerous extensions, losses through loyal attachment to the Royal cause, reduced Sir William's resources, and he sold part of his estates—Herbertshire in Stirlingshire, Morton and Morton-hall, etc. His son, also Sir William, continued his father's work and finished the building over the vaults, which his father had constructed on the solid rock, up to the level of the Courtyard. These are his initials you see over the door as you enter the present living apartments of the Castle—"S.W.S. (Sir William St. Clair), 1622." Note the dining-room ceiling—of fine ornamental plaster, divided into nine panels, richly decorated with hunting and hawking scenes and floral decoration. The district was a favourite one for royal sports, and Scottish Kings hunted on the surrounding moorlands and hills; the village of Pentland was a hunting centre. A former Sir William, Baron of Rosslyn, Pentland and Pentland Moor in free forestrie, was GRAND MASTER HUNTER OF SCOTLAND. He was knighted by Alexander II for his military services, fought under Alexander III against Haakon, King of Norway, in the Battle of Largs, 1263, and died about 1300. His son, also Sir William, took part in the Battle of Roslin, and this son, along with two grandsons, fought also at Bannockburn in Scotland's War of Independence, as we shall see later. The central panel of the ceiling has the St. Clair Arms—the engrailed cross; supporters, *dexter*, a mermaid with a comb in one hand,

and a bunch of seaweed in the other; *sinister*, a griffin; crest, a dove; Motto, "Credo"; date, 1622. The Castle was again complete. This was that Sir William who was interred in the Chapel on the day of the Battle of Dunbar, 3rd September, 1650, and the last to be buried in his armour, as previously noted.

### CASTLE BATTERED BY CROMWELL'S TROOPS

His son, Sir John, called the "Prince," resisted the attack on the Castle by Cromwell's troops under General Monk, in 1650, but in vain, and Sir John was sent a prisoner to Tynemouth Castle, returning to Rosslyn to die in 1690. Rare literary and historical treasures perished. The only part of the building that escaped the fire of four pieces of ordnance, a mortar piece and 600 troopers, is the part now standing, the north-east and west sides being battered down, and the Castle pillaged. It was again pillaged during the time of Sir James St. Clair, Father Hay's stepfather, on 11th December, 1688, at 10 o'clock at night by a mob from Edinburgh, assisted by Rosslyn's own inhabitants and the Laird's own tenants; the Chapel was also entered and damaged. The object of the rabble was that the furniture and vestments were regarded as popish and idolatrous. This was the time when the Prince of Orange landed in England, prior to the final establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland.

Well indeed has Byron described it—

" Oh, Roslin! time, war, flood and fire,  
Have made your glories star by star expire.  
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,  
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
And say, ' here was or is,' where all is doubly  
night.

" Alas! thy lofty castle! and alas!  
Thy trebly hundred triumphs! and the day  
When Sinclair made the dagger's edge surpass  
The conqueror's sword, in bearing fame away."

A hundred years later (1788) Grose speaks of the Castle as "haggard and utterly dilapidated—the mere wreck of a great pile riding on a little sea of forest, and a rueful apology for the once grand fabric, whose name of 'Rosslyn Castle' is so intimately associated with melody and song" (Grant's "Old & New Edinburgh," vol. III, p. 347). For even in the early centuries of the Castle's existence when life in this northern land might be considered hard and austere, it must be remembered that Scotland had a culture and refinement of its own; the fine arts were not neglected, and there was all the splendour of feudal pageantry. How lively and splendid for instance was the Court of James IV? And the Court of James I was luxurious we know from the Exchequer Rolls. His widowed Queen bought from Flanders "gold rings, crimson satin, purple velvet, ostrich feathers and mantles of marten fur as well as a silver seal; and had a new little ship built for herself at Leith in 1435, costing £25, 18s. 3d." (James I, Balfour Melville, pp. 278, 249, 263). Chivalry and pure knightly virtues as well as noble austerities—courage and duty, found expression in knightly adventure of most resolute and determined heroism, and in joust and tournament. Chivalry in the earlier phases of our history was not considered a moral extravagance, but rather the sole justification of power and strength. Students, bards, poets and painters lingered here, and oaken hall and tapestried chamber resounded to the music of lute and harpsichord. Love and laughter held high carnival, and fair maidens were wooed and won by valiant squire and knight, conflicting emotions of love and duty not infrequently playing a decisive part in tragic and romantic amours.

"And in the lofty arched hall  
Was spread the gorgeous festival.

"Their clanging bowls old warriors quaffed,  
Loudly they spoke and loudly laughed:  
Whispered young knights in tones more mild  
To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.

“ Round go the flasks of ruddy wine  
From Bordeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine,  
Their tasks the busy servers ply,  
And all is mirth and revelry.”

(“ Lay of the Last Minstrel.”)

As we enter the Castle by the bridge the massive fragments which we see point to the strength of the former fastness, and its strong defence against attack. Built truly for security and protection in stern times, we do well to remember that those were days in Scotland when national sentiment was a vital force, and valiant men fought and fell for that Freedom which they counted dearer than life itself. The walls of the Castle were nine feet thick, and the total length about 200 feet by 90 feet broad, and in several places we can see where it has been hewn out of the living rock. The modern part of the 1622 building is inhabited, and visitors can gain admission to the two lower tiers of Vaults by passing through a doorway in the garden wall to the left. In front of the entrance to these Vaults called the “ Old Guard Rooms,” from the garden, and near the base of the Clock Tower stands a very ancient yew tree of immense size that may have been planted about the time the Castle was built, at the beginning of the 14th century. Tradition says it supplied wood for the archers’ bows. It may be an indication of the poor condition of Scottish timber that the Parliament of James I, in 1426, passed a law that merchants trading overseas were to bring home from each voyage harness and armour, with spear-shafts and bow-shafts. The Castle gardens were so famed for their strawberries in 1815 that they formed a chief attraction for many Edinburgh citizens.

#### OLD KITCHEN, BAKEHOUSE AND DUNGEONS

These are accommodated in three storeys below the level of the courtyard under the present living apartments.

The bottom floor consists of the Kitchen with a very large fireplace and a small window; the “ Great



Turnpike” and four cellars or dungeons, only one of which has a fireplace. The tier above has the Bakehouse and large oven. The two tiers are connected by the staircase and with the garden by means of the passage on the second floor, the entrance to which is near the yew tree.

At the bottom of the “Great Turnpike” on the right hand between the stair and the kitchen, is a doorway which leads down a few steps under the stair—how far it is impossible to say—it has been filled up. Perhaps it led to Vaults farther down—remains of strong iron hinges for a heavy door are visible; or it may just have been a cupboard or recess, who can tell! Many of the recesses would hold the open iron lamp used with a rush wick—the Scottish crusie lamp, for these ancient dwellings admitted little daylight.

#### LIFT, SPEAKING-TUBE, DRAINAGE, WATER

At the foot of the “Great Turnpike” is an aperture or “hatch” in the roof—evidently a lift or hoist from the kitchen and bakehouse to the Great Hall above or the ante-room adjoining. In the kitchen, and also in the bakehouse, there is a small aperture, 8-9 inches square, probably used as a speaking-tube or shaft communicating with the ante-room of the Great Hall. The drainage was primitive. Examples are seen in the south-east side of kitchen and bakehouse, while in the window jambs of both apartments, a broken aperture shows how the drainage was conducted down through the body of the wall, and emptied itself through an opening cut in the rock outside. Several such outlets are seen in various places round the Castle.

The Dutch contractor Peter Bruschi who brought in the first public gravitation water supply to the City of Edinburgh from Tod’s Well, Comiston, in 1676, brought water in lead pipes to the inner Court and lower Vaults of Rosslyn Castle in the time of Sir James St. Clair, who although a Roman Catholic, was made a Burgess of Edinburgh by Provost Currie in 1673, and was responsible for obtaining Bruschi’s

services for the city ("Genealogy," p. 106, and "Call of the Pentlands," ch. xiii).

The oven in the Bakehouse is 8 feet long by 5 feet high, and the Kitchen fireplace where the oxen were roasted whole 10 feet by 9 feet and 7 feet high in the middle, with a cut runway for the grease from the dripping roasting-jacks and spits.

The third tier is now entered only from the house above. Near the bottom of the stair, in the passage, opposite the door of the first compartment to the left is a built-up doorway, which leads into the Vaults said to be under the Courtyard. Here, we are told, is a dungeon, called "Little Ease," a pit into which prisoners were let down with ropes!

Above the third tier is the Great Hall, part forming the kitchen of the modern dwelling. The other part which is ruinous contains a handsome moulded fireplace over which are the initials of Sir William St. Clair and his wife Jean Edmiston, with date 1597. There is also a small recess, perhaps used by the butler washing glasses and cleaning silver. Through a doorway with Gothic moulding is the entrance to the Clock Tower. All the compartments of the two upper tiers and the Clock Tower have eyelet or shot-holes, while in the lower flats the original iron window bars horizontal and vertical are interlaced in the usual ancient Scottish fashion, to give additional strength and security.

#### THE FIVE DIFFERENT PERIODS AT WHICH THE CASTLE WAS BUILT

- (1) 1304 (approx.) Lantern, Lamp or Peel Tower, at north-east corner.
- (2) 1390 (approx.) Keep or Great Dungeon.
- (3) 1417-1450 Connecting portion between 1 and 2 along the north-west, north and north-east sides.
- (4) 1582-1597 Vaults up to the Courtyard level, Tower at south corner, and Great Hall.
- (5) 1622 Modern part now standing over north-east end of the Vaults.

## ROSSLYN'S SCENIC LORE

### THE NORTH ESK—RIVER OF ROMANCE

“It is telling a tale that has been repeated a thousand times, to say, that a morning of leisure can scarcely be anywhere more delightfully spent than in the woods of Rosslyn, and on the banks of the Esk. . . . Rosslyn and its adjacent scenery have associations, dear to the antiquary and historian, which may fairly entitle it to precedence over every other Scottish scene of the same kind.”

—SIR WALTER SCOTT

(“Provincial Antiquities of Scotland.”)

**R**IVERS OF ROMANCE abound in Scotland, and the North Esk is one of them. From its source high up among the Pentland Heights near the Boarstane and the boundary line between Midlothian and Tweeddale, it is early gathered into a reservoir, whose engineer was Thomas Stevenson, father of Robert Louis Stevenson, constructed in 1850 to supply water and power used in the paper mills on the river's banks. Passing through Carlops, once a village of weavers, it flows on through the wooded gorge of Habbie's Howe and the woods surrounding Penicuik House, on to “Rosslyn's rocky glen,” and Hawthornden, Melville Castle and Dalkeith Palace, entering the Firth of Forth at Musselburgh. Alas that the clear sparkling waters of the moorland stream should be so spoiled by the industries of the valley. Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary entry is still true—“the water of the stream is dingy and muddy.” Modern legislation on river pollution is sadly lacking.

“I never passed through a more delicious dell than the Glen of Rosslyn,” wrote Dorothy; and of the river it has been written—“No stream in Scotland can boast such a varied succession of the most interesting objects, as well as the most romantic and beautiful scenery.” It is associated with some of the most famous men in Scottish literature who have lived on its banks, and has inspired the muse of some of Scotland’s best poets.

#### SIR WALTER SCOTT AND LASSWADE

What was Sir Walter’s connection with the district around Rosslyn and Esk’s fair stream, whose surrounding woods are lovely indeed in Spring and Summer, but glorious when arrayed in all their Autumn tints, or in the purest white of Winter’s snows. All who have an eye for Nature’s beauty visit the place; and we need not wonder that Scott found inspiration here, for he loved these sylvan retreats, and wrote—

“Sweet are thy paths, O passing sweet!  
By Esk’s fair streams that run:  
O’er airy steep, through copsewood deep,  
Impervious to the sun.”

It was to Lasswade that he brought his bride, Charlotte Margaret Carpenter, in 1798; here in 1802 he began “The Lay of the Last Minstrel” and dedicated it to Lord Dalkeith, with its Ballad of “Rosabelle,” William of Deloraine’s ride, and the Moss-trooper’s story, and laid the foundations of his fame. Wordsworth heard four of the six cantos “partly read and partly recited in an enthusiastic style of chant,” and he praised “the easy flowing energy” of the Lay. Scott recounted to him the historic and legendary associations of the beauteous vale. For him it was bound up in a thousand happy memories—the dearest haunt in the days of his boyish ramblings, and the scene of the sunniest portions of some of his happiest years. It is often asked if Scott’s cottage at Lasswade still stands.



Yes, but much enlarged. It was a thatched cottage on the right hand of the road from Loanhead to Lasswade, not far from Melville Lodge. Here in this "little place by the roadside, with a view, a garden, and one big living-room," he received many of his friends—the young Advocates, George Cranstoun (Lord Corehouse) and William Erskine (Lord Kinnedder), both fond of literature; the Clerks of Penicuik; Mackenzie, Author of "The Man of Feeling," whose recreation was Cock-fighting, and who then occupied a charming villa at Auchindinny; Lord Woodhouselee, who maintained erroneously that his estate was the scene of Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," but which the Laird of Newhall corrected in his edition of Ramsay's Works in 1808, although not before it had got into the Dictionary of National Biography and the Ordnance Survey Map. Among others were Dr. John Leyden, and Sir John Stoddart searching for materials for his "Remarks on Local Scenery in Scotland" (pub. 1801). Sir John dwells on "the simple unostentatious elegance of the cottage, and the domestic picture which he there contemplated—a man of native kindness and cultivated talent, passing the intervals of a learned profession amidst scenes highly favourable to his poetic inspirations, not in churlish and rustic solitude, but in the daily exercise of the most precious sympathies as a husband, a father and a friend." Scott called on Sir John at Malta, during his last tour in 1831, when the latter was Chief Judge, and they recalled the happy Lasswade days.

Here also Scott formed intimacies with the noble families of Melville and Buccleuch, to whom he was indebted for his Sheriffship, both of whom had Castles in the same valley, of which he wrote—

" Who knows not Melville's beechy grove,  
And Rosslyn's rocky glen;  
Dalkeith which all the virtues love,  
And Classic Hawthornden? "

Lasswade is said to have got its name from the fact that prior to a bridge over the Esk, a girl or lass

waded through the water with travellers on her back. When they were securely seated upon the hurdle, and all was ready to start, the passenger gave the signal, saying, "LASS, WADE."

Lasswade became the Gandercleugh of the Novels.

He introduces Rosslyn and the Eskside district into his writings frequently. Nothing did so much to popularise the district as the publication of the Lay, of which edition followed edition, and its author's fame spread far and wide.

The scenery of the Esk is described in the Ballad—"The Gray Brother," mention being made of Auchindinny, Haunted Woodhouselee, Melville Castle which was so much admired by George IV on his visit in 1822, Rosslyn Castle, Dalkeith, Hawthornden, and the Motto of the Clerks of Penicuik—"Free for a Blast," being the tenure of the Barony namely that when the King shall come to hunt, the proprietor shall sit upon the Buckstane, and wind three blasts of a horn. It is also quoted in "Ivanhoe"—

"From that fair dome, where suit is paid  
By blast of bugle free,  
To Auchindinny's hazel shade,  
And Haunted Woodhouselee."

And in "The Abbot" he describes the great match on Rosslyn Moor between Bothwell and the Baron of Roslin, who could judge a hawk's flight as well as any man in Scotland, witnessed by Mary of Scots—"She was the loveliest creature to look upon that ever I saw with eye, and no lady in the land liked better the fair flight of a falcon. A butt of Rhenish and a ring of gold was the wager . . . and to hear her voice as clear and sweet as a mavis's whistle, mix among our jolly whooping and whistling; and to mark all the nobles dashing round her—happiest he who got a word or a look—tearing through moss and hagg, and venturing neck and limb to gain the praise of a bold rider, and the blink of the bonny Queen's bright eye! Ay, ay, pomp and pleasure pass away as speedily as the wap of a falcon's wing" (ch. 17).

“Guy Mannering” introduces the Rullion Green battlefield on the Pentland slopes “dear to the Presbyterian heart”; “Old Mortality”—the House of Muir farm; “St. Ronan’s Well”—the Howgate; Allan Ramsay’s “Sir William Worthy,” and the beautiful Scottish Air, “Roslin Castle,” and the equally pleasing song—

“Of Nannie’s charms the shepherd sang,  
The hills and dales with Nannie rang,  
While Roslin Castle heard the swain,  
And echoed back the cheerful strain.”

The original of Monkbarons in the “Antiquary” was said to be Baron Clerk of Penicuik; and of Henry Morton in “Old Mortality”—Borthwick of Lawhead. Howgate is for ever associated with Dr. John Brown’s “Rab and His Friends,” and as a stopping-place in the Stage-coach run between Edinburgh and Peebles. Mrs. Hamilton’s “Cottagers of Glenburne” is linked with Easter Howgate; “Sherlock Holmes” with Mauricewood, and The Carlops of Allan Ramsay with the ring of the weavers’ shuttle, the whirr of the muircock, and Mause the Witch of the Pastoral Comedy.

Scott frequently walked across country from Lasswade to new Woodhouselee on the Pentland Hills. Here is his description of the hills, as noted in his Journal—

“I think I never saw anything more beautiful than the ridge of Carnethy against a clear frosty sky, with its peaks and varied slopes. The hills glowed like purple amethysts; the sky glowed topaz and vermilion colours. I never saw a finer screen than Pentland, considering that it is neither rocky nor highly elevated.”

There were times when Scott would appear at Woodhouselee shortly after breakfast, although at Lasswade he got into the habit of reading and writing late into the night, and took the whole party off for the forenoon among the hills, amusing the young folks with stories such as he was to tell later to the

whole world. In the evening, in addition to the ghost stories, he told stories of the Covenanters, who fought on the hills upon which the house stands.

### THE OLD ROSSLYN INN

When the Wordsworths visited Scott at Lasswade, they left the Inn at Rosslyn—it was next to the Chapel, like many old rural English Church Inns for the accommodation of worshippers from a distance, and was dated 1660—very early in the morning, and arrived at Lasswade while Scott and his wife were still in bed! So they waited in the sitting-room, and had breakfast with them, and stayed till 2 p.m. Scott accompanied them back to Rosslyn.

At this old Inn Dr. Johnson and Boswell dined and took tea on their way to Penicuik House in 1773. On that occasion they were on their way back from the Hebrides, and although they were engaged to be elsewhere at the time, Boswell took Johnson on to Hawthornden, as “I could by no means lose the pleasure of seeing my friend at Hawthornden—of seeing *Sam Johnson* at the very spot, where *Ben Jonson* visited the learned and poetical Drummond.” Burns and Nasmyth the artist breakfasted here one morning after a ramble on the Pentlands, and were so delighted with the fare which they enjoyed at the Inn that Mrs. David Wilson, the landlady was rewarded with two verses scratched on a pewter plate—

“ My blessings on you, sonsie wife!  
I ne’er was here before;  
You’ve gi’en us walth for horn and knife—  
Nae heart could wish for more.

“ Heaven keep you free frae care and strife  
Till far ayont fourscore;  
And while I toddle on through life,  
I’ll ne’er gang by your door.”

The Inn (College Hill) is the residence of the



Chapel's Curator. One experiences a certain thrill in inspecting the old wine cellar with its solid stone walls, several feet thick, climbing the wooden staircase, and viewing the panelled walls, and the large dining-room, where so many of the world's interesting men and women have tarried awhile; and what was this—on one of the window panes—

“ Prince Edward dined here on the  
Anniversary of his mother's birthday, 1859.”

But was it really the work of Prince Edward? The opportunity was taken on the occasion of a visit by King George V and Queen Mary, in 1931, to show Their Majesties the inscription, when it was duly confirmed to be in the writing of His Majesty's father, King Edward VII. Queen Victoria paid a visit just three years before—in 1856. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (as the Duke and Duchess of York) accompanied King George and Queen Mary in 1931.

#### CLASSIC HAWTHORNDEN

On taking our way along the left bank of the river after visiting the Castle, and feasting our eyes upon the Valley scenery, we get a striking backward view of the Castle, and realise the damage that was done in General Monk's bombardment. We leave behind the scenes of war and romance to take up the way of peace and rural beauty, where once came Harold, the Bard of brave St. Clair:—

“ With war and wonder all on flame  
To Rosslyn's bowers young Harold came,  
Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree  
He learned a milder minstrelsy.”

Rosebank House overlooking the river, at Roustain Linn, was once the residence of the Dowager Countess of Rosslyn. Hector Macneill, novelist, poet and song-

writer (1746-1818), author of "Come under my plaidie," was born here—

"Come under my plaidie, the night's gaun to fa';  
Come in frae the cauld blast, the drift, and the snaw;  
Come under my plaidie, and sit doun beside me,  
There's room in't, dear lassie, believe me, for twa."

On the right bank opposite, is Gorton House, with the Caves of Gorton on the cliff face, hiding place of Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, and his gallant band of patriots when harrassed by the English army, after their capture of Edinburgh in 1338. Hawthornden Caves also gave him shelter in his warfare against the English whom he defeated with great slaughter at Wark, Northumberland, for which he received from David II, in 1369, a Charter of Nether Liberton and Hawthornden. Wallace's Cave, capable of holding sixty men is on the same side. A little farther on is the dividing wall between Rosslyn and Hawthornden estates. The public right-of-way along the river bank was established by a case in the House of Lords.

Hawthornden Castle is perched on the top of a steep cliff overlooking the river's deep gorge, and there are charming spots among the famous grounds of Hawthornden, beloved of the poet Drummond, and also Sir Walter, who wrote—

"The spot is wild, the banks are steep,  
With eglantine and hawthorn blossom'd o'er,  
Lychnis, and daffodils, and hare-bells blue;  
From lofty granite crags precipitous,  
The oak, with scanty footing, topples o'er,  
Tossing his limbs to heaven; and from the cleft,  
Fringing the dark-brown natural battlements,  
The hazel throws his silvery branches down;  
There, starting into view, a castled cliff,  
Whose roof is lichen'd o'er, purple and green,  
O'er hangs thy wandering stream romantic Esk,  
And rears its head among the ancient trees."

Little remains of the original Castle—only the 15th century Tower (1443), with walls 7 feet thick, attached to which are the remains of the Banqueting Hall. Probably Hertford destroyed this Castle when he burned Craigmillar Castle, and Rosslyn Castle, or when as Protector Somerset he invaded Scotland in 1547.

A modern house that witnesses to patriotism and poetry—"a kind of minor Abbotsford" as described by Professor Masson, whose "Drummond of Hawthornden" (1873) is the classic on the subject, dates from 1638, and stands on the edge of a high precipitous grey lime-stone rock at a bend in the river, and giving a good view of the river scenery. The Abernethies of Saltoun were early owners in the days of the War of Independence. William Douglas of Strabrok had a Charter of Robert II, about 1387. The Douglasses were owners for 200 years, till 1598, when the properties were purchased by Sir John Drummond, Gentleman Usher to King James VI, second son of Sir Robert Drummond of Carnock, and father of the celebrated poet. In 1782 Dr. Abernethy Drummond presented to Edinburgh University the MSS. of the poet.

On the west wall of the old Tower facing the courtyard is a large tablet with two inscriptions. The first is remarkable because of its history—"To the memory of Sir Lawrence Abernethy of Hawthornden . . . a brave and gallant soldier, who at the head of a party in the year 1338 conquered Lord Douglas, Knight of Liddesdale, five times in one day, yet was taken prisoner before sunset." In Grant's "Old and New Edinburgh" this soldier is spoken of as "one of those infamous traitors who turned their swords against their own country and served the King of England." The other inscription is in memory of the poet Drummond (one of the best known of this ancient and honourable family, who succeeded his father as Laird of Hawthornden at the age of

twenty-four), and concludes with the lines by the poet Young—

“ O sacred solitude, Divine retreat,  
Choice of the prudent, envy of the great!  
By the pure stream, or in thy waving shade  
I court fair Wisdom, that celestial maid.”

Drummond “tender lover, gentle poet and handsome cavalier,” was born in 1585, and wrote “A History of the Five Jameses,” having an inherited reverence for royalty. Robert Chambers wrote—  
“If beautiful and romantic scenery could create and nurse the genius of a poet, Drummond was peculiarly blessed with means of inspiration. In all Scotland there is no spot more finely varied, more rich, graceful or luxuriant, than the cliffs, caves and wooded banks of the river Esk, and the classic shades of Hawthornden . . . the whole course of the stream and glen is like the groundwork of some fairy dream.”

Drummond was devoted to the cause of Charles I, which he espoused, not with the sword but with the pen; and his grief at the King's execution (30th January, 1649) was so profound that his own death in the same year (4th December) was attributed to a broken heart. He is buried in the family vault in Lasswade Church.

Early in life he was the victim of fate. He was engaged to a young, beautiful and accomplished lady, daughter of Cunninghame of Barnes, but she died on the eve of the wedding, and sorrow sent him wandering to other scenes amidst distant climes—

“ I have nought left to wish; my hopes are dead,  
And all with her beneath a marble laid.”

Thirty years later, however, he met and married one who bore a strong resemblance to his former love—Elizabeth Logan, granddaughter of Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig. (Drummond's sister Ann married “Scot of Scotstarvet,” well known to all interested in Scottish History).



## DRUMMOND'S MEETING WITH BEN JONSON

It was during his bachelorhood that the poet-laureate Ben Jonson visited him at Hawthornden, after having walked from London, in defiance of Bacon's hint that he "loved not to see Poesy go on other feet than poetical Dactylus and Spondaeus." They spent some days together in January, 1619, and in April Jonson stayed three weeks with him, and had the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh conferred upon him, and was entertained to a Civic Banquet. The conversation of the two poets was published by the Shakespeare Society in 1842. Sir Walter Scott remarks the diversity of character of the two men—"one, a genius and man of the world, risen from the ranks, having a long struggle for intellectual superiority—the other living a retired life, and therefore cautious and punctilious, timid in delivering his opinion, apt to be surprised and even shocked at the uncompromising strength of conception and expression natural to Jonson."

Drummond was a most accomplished man, and had knowledge of Greek and Latin, French, Italian, Spanish and Hebrew, and was the first Scottish poet who wrote in pure English. At the age of twenty-four he possessed over 550 books in these languages, including 50 in English (Spencer, Shakespeare, etc). He is also spoken of as not only poet and historian, but also a great projector in mechanics, many articles of invention being included in the Patent granted to him by Charles I, among them boats navigating without sails or oars, military machines, a pike, battering ram, telescope, burning glass, anemometer and a condenser. One of the smaller rock caves north-east of the house was called by Scott "The Cypress Grove" or Grotto, being a favourite seat of the poet, where he wrote a treatise called "The Cypress Grove"; or "Philosophical Reflections Against the Fear of Death," which Professor Masson pronounced "superlatively excellent." It is indeed a highlight in a century noted for its meditative prose.

Campbell, who visited here in 1802, wrote:—

“In this sheltered spot, secluded from every human eye, the power of imagination can present a lively image of Drummond in the moment of inspiration, in his favourite bower.”

No doubt the peacefulness, the beauty and the lively song of the birds were a refreshment and invigoration to one who was wise concerning vanity, and had just appreciation of the poise and flattery that surrounded the throne of Princes. In “The Praise of a Solitary Life” he wrote:—

“Thrice happy he who by some shady grove,  
Far from the clam'rous world, doth live his own.  
Though solitary, who is not alone,  
But doth converse with that eternal Love:  
O how more sweet is zephyr's wholesome breath,  
And sighs embalm'd, which new-born flowers  
unfold,  
Than that applause vain Honour doth bequeath!  
How sweet are streams to poyson drunk in Gold!  
The world is full of Horrors, Troubles, Sights,  
Woods' harmless Shades have only true Delights.”

The Miscellany, vol. VII of The Scottish History Society contains the Diary of Sir William Drummond of Hawthornden, 1657-59, son of the poet, which describes the everyday life of an ordinary Midlothian Laird of the period. He is described as having “no particular distinction of character or ability,” and is to be found shaking hands with a man going to be hanged; going with a party to the House of Muir, and ranting “thorrowe all the little towens with a great bagge pipe”; being nearly drowned when he came home late on a Saturday night and staying from Church because his clothes were all spoiled with water. The Diary reveals the existence of a hitherto unknown son of the poet—Ludovick—and contains the entry—Sep. 23, 1658, “Tusday: about 10 a cloke in the night time my brother Lodie was buried with a number of torches and accompanied with the neibours a bout: the charges of his buriall 5// sterling.”

In the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. 73 (8th May, 1939), are Notes on Rock Scribings at Hawthornden by Professor Gordon Childe, F.S.A., and John Taylor, F.S.A.Scot. The figures are preserved in a recess, 25 feet above the river-bed in the sandstone gorge between Hawthornden and, Rosslyn Castles. They probably represent Irish Bronze Age Art, resembling "Cup and Ring" markings, without the cups. Similar Scribings are found at New Grange, Boyne Valley, Ireland. About 100 yards farther upstream, and 20 feet higher up in the cliffs is the artificial Grotto, popularly called Wallace's Cave.

### GYPSES

Rosslyn Glen was once a great resort of Gypsies.

Reference was made (p. 65) to the fact that Sir William St. Clair allowed them to live in a part of the Castle buildings about 1559, where they received not only shelter but kindness and mercy although the laws were severe against them. Sir William, who was made Lord Justice General by Queen Mary in 1559, once saved a gypsy from the gallows on the Borough Muir, explains Father Hay. "He delivered once an Egyptian from the gibbet in the Burrow Moore, ready to be strangled; upon which account the whole body of gypsies were of old, accustomed to gather in the 'Stanks' of Rosslyn,—a relic of the Battle of Roslin, (a low-lying bit of ground north-west of the Castle, where is also the 'Goose's Mound,' where water-fowl were wont to rest), every year during the months of May and June, when they acted several plays."

These Gypsies were obviously a company of strolling players, actors, not mere puppet-showmen, and it is more than a coincidence that the towers assigned to them were known as "Robin Hood" and "Little John," and that the time was May and June, because "Robin Hood and Little John" was one of the most famous of the May-tide plays in Scotland during the 15th and 16th centuries, and like the Gypsies it came under the ban of the law. By an Act of 20th June,

1555, the Scottish Parliament ordained that in all time coming no manner of person be chosen "Robene Hude, nor Little John, The Abbot of Unreason, Queenis of Maij, nor otherwise," under various pains and penalties. The play called "Robin Hood" was probably their most important play. What the others were we do not know. ("Scottish Gypsies under the Stewarts," pp. 56-58, David Macritchie).

The great number of Gypsies in the Rosslyn neighbourhood, and the freedom they enjoyed from the laird, formed the subject of a Privy Council Enactment on July 15, 1623. The Council's attention had been drawn to this Patmos of the outlawed race, and they pointed out that while the laws enjoined all persons in authority "to execute to the deid the counterfeit thieves and limmers, the Egyptians," it was nevertheless reported that a number of them were within the bounds of Rosslyn, "where they have a peaceable receipt and abode as if they were lawful subjects, committing stowths, and reifs in all parts where they may find occasion." The Council therefore issued an Order to the Sheriff of the district, who happened to be Sinclair, Younger of Rosslyn, himself, commanding him "to pass, search, seek, hunt, follow and pursue the said vagabond thieves and limmers," and bring them to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh for due punishment ("Domestic Annals of Scotland, vol. I, p. 536). This was done, and a large capture was made of "Faws," men, women and children, who appeared for trial. On 23rd January, 1624, eight leaders were sentenced to be hanged at the Burgh Muir (the usual place of execution), and on the day when the sentence was carried out, the 29th, their widows and children were also "dilaitit" before the Court for the same offence of being "Egyptians." They also were found guilty, and sentenced to suffer death by drowning, but the King had compassion upon them, and ordered that they depart out of the Kingdom. As the law in Scotland differed from that in England, all they had to do was to pass over the Border into Northumberland, which is no doubt what they did, there to resume their former life, with a "clean record," which the English



law enabled them to do ("Pitcairn's Criminal Trials," vol. III, pp. 559-62).

### THE BATTLE OF ROSSLYN

This was an important battle, or rather triple battle, in the Scottish War of Independence, February 24, 1302-3 (prior to 1600 the year began March 25th and ended March 24th), against Edward I's army of aggression, 30,000 in number, who came with the purpose of subduing Scotland and devastating the country already laid waste. One column under Sir John Segrave pitched at Rosslyn, the second under Sir Ralph, the Cofferer—paymaster of the English army—at Loanhead, and the third under Sir Robert Neville near Gilmerton Grange. The Scots were under Sir John Comyn of the family of Baliol, and Sir Simon Fraser of Oliver Castle, Tweeddale, loyal friends of Wallace, with a carefully selected army of 8,000 men, and marching from Biggar, 16 miles away, in the night, came suddenly on the English first column of 10,000. The fight, says Father Hay, was at a place on the moor (Pentland Moor) called Bilsdone (Bilston) Burne, where Comyn and two Captains Sir William Saintclair and the Fraser proved so valiant that in a short time they became victors, and slew the English General Rodolph. No sooner was victory gained than another army of 10,000 approached. This was the signal to the Scots for the prisoners of the previous fight to be slain lest they should rise again, after which the Scots tackled the second lot of 10,000 at Draidone Burn, and hardly had the second victory been obtained and the Cofferer slain, when lo! a third army of like number was ready to engage. This rather dismayed the Scots, but through the persuasive exhortations of their Captains, their courage was renewed "and anone the three captains went through all the companies where the wounded, and slain were, and slew all the English that were alive, and to every Scot living they gave a weapon, to the end they might kill the English that came upon them, and after that they went to

prayer, desiring God to remove their offences and to consider how just their cause was. The English thinking because they were with heads uncovered and knees bended, that they craved mercy of them; and so without thought of any resistance to be made, they came over Draidone Burn, where, contrary to their expectation of friends, they found foes, of men overcome, men ready to be victors. Yea, within a short time, put them to flight. The victory gained as great praise to our country as any they ever obtained."

Sir William, because his dwelling was in that part of the country, was given the ground on which the battle was fought. The names remain to this day—"Shinbones Field" on Dryden estate, where bones have been dug up from time to time; the "Hewan," or Hewings, where carnage was great; "Stinking Rig," "Killburn," and Mount Marle, a farm on Dryden estate, so called from a tradition that when the enemy were beginning to flee one of them cried to Marl, his leader—"Mount, Marl—and ride!" Mount Marl and Killburn may have derived their names from the Marl pits and kilns existing in the locality. When the ground at "Shinbanes Park" was being cultivated long afterwards, tradition says the harrows were so entangled with bones of the dead, that carts had to follow them in the field into which the bones were thrown, carted away and buried by the burnside. Coins of the period have been found. Dryden House is now a ruin. Opposite to Mount Marl on the road from Rosslyn to Polton is a mausoleum to the memory of James Lockhart Wishart of Lee and Carnwath, a former proprietor famed in both Scottish and European history, who died at Pisa, Italy, 1790.

This Sir William, who is said to have fought at the Battle of Rosslyn, and built the first part of Rosslyn Castle, also fought at Bannockburn on St. John's Day, 1314, with his two sons, Henry and William, all of whom Bruce rewarded for their great bravery. Henry he received into his service, and gave him a pension (at Forfar) which King David confirmed to his son and heir William, and gave him the lands of Morton and

Mortonhall. William he made Bishop of Dunkeld, whom the King called "his own Bishop" on account of his subsequent valour in repelling an invasion of the English who landed on the shores of Fife, 1317, while the King was in Ireland. He married Jane Haliburton, daughter of Lord Dirleton, by whom he had Henry, William, and Gregory, ancestor of the St. Clairs of Longformacus. Sir Henry was one of the twenty-nine Scottish Nobles who signed the Letter from the Scottish Parliament, in Arbroath Abbey, to the Pope on 6th April, 1320, requiring the English King to respect Scottish Independence; that "so long as a hundred of us are left alive we will never in any degree be subjected to the English. It is not for glory, riches or honour that we fight, but for liberty alone, which no good man loses, but with his life." This was that Sir Henry who received from King Robert the Bruce a Charter of the Pentland Hills. In the Letter he is ranked among the Barons, and designed "Panetarius Scotiae."

#### "SCOTS WHA HA'E"

The same desire for Liberty and Independence that animated the Scots Army at Rosslyn—which incidentally is not far from Glencorse Barracks, Headquarters of that first Regiment of the Line, the Royal Scots—flamed in the breasts of the Scottish warriors at Bannockburn, twelve years later, and Burns' Ode is in the form of an Address to the Army on the eventful morning of that day. Professor Wilson (Christopher North) remarked that this Ode—the grandest outside the Bible—is sublime! As a Song of Liberty it thrills the hearts of all true Britons, whether Scots or English, and no excuse is needed for including it here as an interpretation of the atmosphere of Rosslyn's field of strife and victory, and the loyalty of the House of St. Clair to the Scottish Crown:—

"Scots, wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled!  
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led!  
Welcome to your gory bed,  
Or to victory!

“ Now’s the day, and now’s the hour;  
See the front o’ battle lour;  
See approach proud Edward’s power—  
Chains and slavery!

“ Wha will be a traitor knave?  
Wha can fill a coward’s grave?  
Wha sae base as be a slave?  
Let him turn and flee!

“ Wha for Scotland’s king and law  
Freedom’s sword will strongly draw,  
Freeman stand, or freeman fa’  
Let him follow me!

“ By oppression’s woes and pains!  
By your sons in servile chains!  
We will drain our dearest veins,  
But they shall be free!

“ Lay the proud usurper low!  
Tyrants fall in every foe!  
Liberty’s in every blow!  
Let us do, or die! ”

### PENTLAND DEER HUNT

This Royal Hunt took place on the Pentland Hills, and is described in the author’s “ Pentland Days and Country Ways.” King Robert Bruce found relaxation in hawking and hunting, and in following the chase in this district, and had often started a white faunch deer that was too fleet for his hounds. Sir William St. Clair wagered that his two hounds “ Help ” and “ Hold ” would kill the deer before she crossed the March Burn in Glencorse Valley, now covered by “ The Queen of the Reservoirs,” or forfeit his life.

A great hunt ensued, and as the deer reached the middle of the Burn, Sir William’s hounds turned the deer back, and killed it at Sir William’s side, and in gratitude for his deliverance he is said to have built the Church of Saint Katherine-in-the-Hopes. The hill



from which the King viewed the contest is called the "King's Hill," and the place where Sir William hunted, the "Knight's Field."

### ROSSLYN CASTLE'S "SLEEPING LADY"

If Hawthornden has various relics of antiquity, an incised slab with the initials of Robert III and his Queen Annabella Drummond (1396), mother of the poet King James I of Scotland, the Queen's silk dress and shoes, the long cane of Bess, Duchess of Lauderdale, famous for her diamonds and furious temper, and a tartan coat worn by Bonnie Prince Charlie in the 'Forty-five, and a two-handed traditional sword of Robert the Bruce, which Queen Victoria examined in 1842 and 1856, the handle of which was made from the tusk of a narwhal, with four reverse guards ("Archaeology of Scotland," p. 683); if William Preston of Gorton House, Lasswade, in 1452, obtained in France the Arm-bone of St. Giles, which was presented to the "Church of Edinburgh," and buried in the Lady Chapel of St. Giles (Proc. Soc. Ant. March 12, 1877, p. 154); if Penicuik House has the buff coat that Viscount Dundee (Claverhouse) wore at Killiecrankie (July 26, 1689); if Craig House (1565), Craiglockhart Hill, is haunted by the "Green Lady"; Woodhouselee by the "White Lady" with "a gown of Manchester goods with a wee flowerie on it"—ROSSLYN CASTLE has its "Sleeping Lady." Here is the legend—

In the vaults under the Courtyard a great treasure of several millions of pounds lies buried. It is under the guardianship of a lady of the ancient house of St. Clair, who, not very faithful to her trust, has been long in a dormant state. Awakened, however, by the sound of a trumpet, which must be heard in one of the lower apartments, she is to make her appearance, and to point out the spot where the treasure lies (Slezer in "Theatrum Scotiae," 1693). If she could but be awakened, and point to the buried treasure, then Rosslyn Castle might rise once more from its ruins, and become the majestic pile that once it was.

## INSPIRATION OF SCOTTISH LITERATURE

Not only is Rosslyn and district replete with historical recollections of Scotland's patriotism and glory, but Scottish Literature also found inspiration here—Allan Ramsay in the "Habbie's Howe," leader of the Scottish poetical revival of the 18th century, who prepared the way for Fergusson and Burns, and described by Scott as "a good jovial honest fellow, who could crack a bottle with the best"; Drummond in Hawthornden, keenly sensitive to the beauty in natural scenery, and the first in Scottish poetry to record the beauty of a mountain height shining in the snow; Scott and Wordsworth and De Quincey in Rosslyn and Lasswade; Henry Mackenzie at Auchindinny; Dr. John Brown at The Howgate; Robert Louis Stevenson at Glencorse, and Fraser-Tytlers at Woodhouselee. Nor will we forget that James Thomson's nature poetry marked a new era in English literature. John Hill Burton, Historiographer-Royal for Scotland, lived at Morton House, the property of the St. Clairs in the reign of James III. The Architect of the Scott Monument, George Meikle Kemp first visited Rosslyn Chapel at the age of ten, and his emotions he later described as those of "tremulous surprise." The effect of this building upon his impressionable mind never left him.

"The most exquisitely beautiful of Churches is Rosslyn Chapel," wrote the American poet, William Winter, author of "Shakespeare's England." Writing of the "Heart of Scotland—Britain's Other Eye" (Ben Jonson), he said, "There is no literature in the world so musically, tenderly and weirdly poetical as the Scottish literature; there is no place on earth where the imaginative instinct of the national mind has resisted, as it has resisted in Scotland, the encroachment of utility upon the domain of romance; there is no people whose history has excelled that of Scotland in the display of heroic, intellectual and moral purpose, combined with passionate sensibility . . . a race of beings intensely original, individual, passionate, and magnificent." "Scotland is the

natural home of imagination, romance and poetry" ("Gray Days and Gold"). And who would disagree with our American brother.

This district of the Esk Valley with its architectural gem, and its ancient Castle and enchanting landscape has played a notable part in Scotland's literary, as well as her historical and romantic life.

One who came from the Far East of the United States of America to visit the scenes of his early childhood, wrote—

"No adequate idea of the beauties of the Roslin district can be conveyed to a stranger by verbal description, especially to one who has never been in such an old country as Scotland, and has never seen ruined castles and abbeys or ancient piles of ornate architecture. Such an one cannot possibly overestimate the romantic appearance of these features of the landscape. Highly, therefore, as my parents had in their affection spoken of the scenes I had come to visit, they had failed to raise expectations beyond what the reality could justify; nay, these had been exceeded by the delight I had experienced from actual survey. I carried away with me a sense of unalloyed pleasure that would dwell in my memory through all my life."

May such be the happy experience of all who come to Rosslyn (and visit the various places to which it has been the privilege of the author to act as Guide) to view the Chapel, the Castle, and the scenic lore of this interesting Scottish countryside.















DA  
890  
R6G7

Grant, Will  
Rosslyn

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---

