

## 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.