



THE FOUNDRESS OF TRINITY HOSPITAL

Queen Mary of Gueldres, widow of King James II, wearing a coronet, is depicted as Saint Cecilia, playing on an organ. The figure kneeling in the foreground is that of Sir Edward Bonkil, the first Provost of Trinity College Church and Hospital. The third figure is believed to be that of a daughter of the Queen.

The original picture, painted as a panel of the altar-piece of Trinity College Church, is attributed to Hugo van der Goes (about 1475).

It is believed to have been carried away by the English Army under the Earl of Hertford in 1544, was restored to Scotland in 1857, and is now preserved in Holyrood Palace.

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MEDICAL RENAISSANCE IN THE TIME OF JAMES IV.

DURING the 15th century the Town Council of Edinburgh appears to have become very much exercised about the health of the city and its cleansing, with the result that many minutes appear in the records of the burgh during the latter half of this century and the early 16th century, containing regulations for the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases.

An objectionable practice of the inhabitants of the city in early times appears to have been the keeping of swine, which were allowed to wander freely in the streets and pick up what they could.

In 1450, it was ordained that all men and women who had "swyne" wandering in the town should remove them out of the town or keep them "in band." If the swine were found loose, they were to be forfeited and their price applied to the building of the Kirk.¹ In 1494, various regulations were laid down in regard to the sale of poultry, geese, flesh and other easily corruptible kinds of food. It is quite in accord with recent legislation that the dealers in poultry, geese and other wild fowl were obliged to sell them alive or fresh pulled, and forbidden to "powder" them, while any fleshers "powdering" flesh for preservation were liable to have this confiscated.²

With the rise of democracy in the 14th century, guilds of craftsmen came into existence in the towns, forming trades unions with very stringent regulations. In Scotland, as in England, the merchant burgesses of the towns were favoured by the Crown as an offset to the dangerous power of the nobles. Among other guilds, that of the Barbers was in active operation prior to 1451. In that year we find Queen Mary of Gueldres exerting her influence to obtain the entrance of Aitkyne, a barber, presumably attached to the Court, whom she desired to be admitted to the Guild. It is evident, from the following Town Council minute, that Aitkyne, in addition to practising the minor surgery customary to a barber, also acted as an apothecary:—

"12th May, 1451. Aitkyne, barbi tonsor, effectus est burgensis ad instantiam domine Regine gratis datur et etiam conceditur sibi [blank] gilde pro tempore vite sue et in amplius vt possit vti libertate gilde tempore vite sue, soluendo species et vinum nusquam est sibi successurus post obitum ad libertatem gilde.



SWINE IN EDINBURGH STREETS
Showing the outside stair, which was a feature of old Scottish houses, with the sty beneath it

¹ p. 12, ² p. 67: "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403-1528."

“ (Aitkyne, barber, is made burgesse at the instance of Our Lady the Queen, without payment, and it is also conceded to him [*blank*] of the guild for the period of his life, and further, that he might use the freedom of the guild for the period of his life, paying spices and wine, and no one shall succeed him in the freedom of the guild after his death).”¹

An incidental reference in a letter from James IV. to the Town Council, indicates that a house and booth in the Bellhouse of the city had been occupied in the time of his grandsire (James II., 1431-1460) by an apothecary. The letter of 1509 requests that the same house and booth may be assigned to “ Maister Stephane, ypothegar, sa that he may be enterit thairintil and vse the samin with his materiall and spisery sa that he may be fundin thair redy to do ws seruice.”²

We may assume that in making regulations for the betterment of the public health, which were sometimes apparently initiated at the instance of the King, the Town Council took the opinion of those like Aitkyne who had experience qualifying them to give advice.

The apothecaries of the 15th century seem to have practised successfully and unostentatiously, but an indication of the drugs they used and of their general method of practice may be gained from the Gaelic medical manuscripts to which reference has already been made. There seems to have been a tendency to long and imposing prescriptions, which are satirised by Robert Henryson (1430-1506), the Dunfermline poet, in “ Sum Practysis of Medecyne.” The fact that a well-known and popular poet should consider it worth his while to poke fun at the apothecaries shows that this calling was of good standing, and that his humour would be appreciated by all classes of society. The following remedy for sleeplessness is one of six humorous prescriptions that he gives:—

DIA LONGUM.

Recipe, thre ruggis of the reid ruke,
 The gant of ane gray meir, The claik of ane guss,
 The dram of ane drekterss, the douk of ane duke,
 The gaw of ane grene dow, The leg of ane lowss,
 fyve vnce of ane fle wing, the fyn of ane fluke,
 With ane sleiffull of slak, that growis in the sluss;
 myng all thir in ane mass with the mone cruke.
 This vntment is rycht ganand for your awin vss,
 With reid nettill seid in strang wesche to steip,
 For to bath your ba cod,
 quhen ye wald nop and nod ; } To latt yow to sleip.³
 Is nocht bettir, be god,

King James IV. (1473-1513) was an enlightened monarch, who, despite his faults, did much for the arts and commerce of his country. Among other branches of human activity, his foresight, and perhaps his inquisitiveness, led him

¹ p. 12. “ Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403-1528.”

² p. 125. “ Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403-1528.”

³ “ The Poems of Robert Henryson,” Ed. by G. Gregory Smith, Edinburgh, 1908, Vol. III, p. 151.

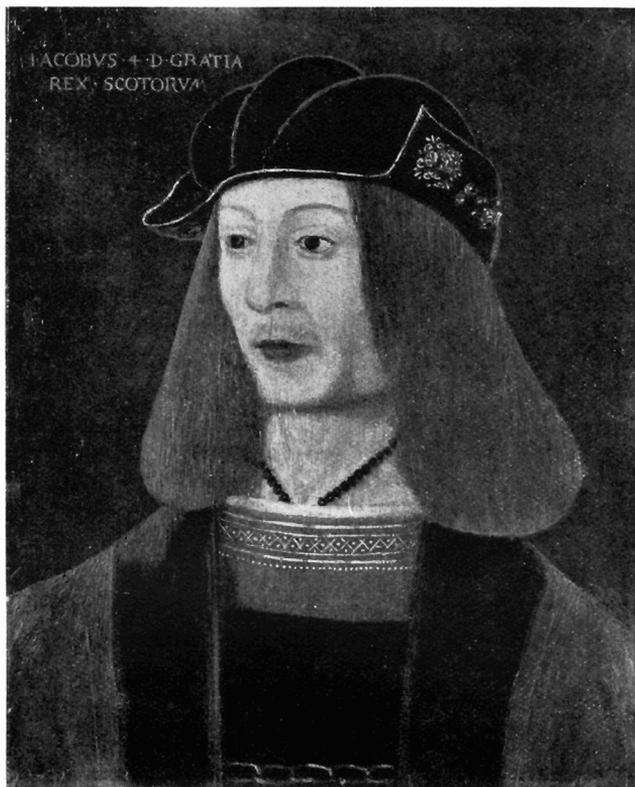
to take a special interest in medical affairs. A contemporary historian remarks of him: "In the meane tyme this nobill King James the fourt was weill leirnit in the art of mediecein and also ane cuning sorugenar that nane in his realme that wssit [*used*] that craft bot wald tak his counsall in all proceedingis."¹ Buchanan also says of him: "He greedily imbibed an ancient custom of the nobility, for he was skilful in curing wounds." He was also a patron of the dentist's art and, on occasion,

patients suffering from toothache submitted to a trial of his skill at Holyrood and accepted his largesse. His self-confidence as a surgeon possibly led him at times to undertake operations which he could not successfully accomplish. In his Treasurer's accounts there is an ominous entry:—

10 April, 1497. "Item, giffin to ye blind wif yat hed her eyne schorne xiijs."²

This very probably refers to an attempt on the part of James to couch cataracts, with an unsuccessful result. Thirteen shillings does not seem too much compensation to receive for loss of vision.

Lindesay of Pitscottie records a case which illustrates James's curiosity in matters of physiology. A man child was born with two bodies from the waist upwards. The King caused him to be carefully brought up and taught, and he lived to the age of twenty-eight years. One body, it is said, died long before the other, to the great grief of the survivor.



KING JAMES IV. (1473-1513)

(Original preserved in the Royal Scottish National Portrait Gallery)

¹ Lindesay of Pitscottie: "Chronicles of Scotland," Edinburgh, Vol. I, p. 235, Book XX, Chap. VII.

² Pitcairne: "Criminal Trials in Scotland," Vol. I, Part I, p. 117.

The same historian naively records an experiment in the domain of psychology, which the King carried out in the year 1493 :—

“ And also the King gart [*caused*] tak ane dum woman and put hir in Inchkeytht [*the Island of Inchkeith*] and gaif [*gave*] hir tua zoung bairnes in companie witht hir and gart furnishe them of all necessar thingis . . . to know quhat langage thir bairnes wald speik quhene [*when*] they come to lauchfull aige. Sum sayis they spak goode hebrew bot as to myself I knaw not.”¹

King James also took a great deal of interest in chemical experiments, and among his letters is one of 1508 thanking a certain James Inglis for books on alchemy, which were handed over to the King.² There are numerous items in the Treasurer's accounts for aqua vitæ, flasks, etc., and one entry is for money paid to William Foular, potingair [*apothecary*] for potingary to the King and Queen, distillation of waters, aqua vitæ, and potingary books in English from the 17th day of December, 1506.³

The interest taken by the King in the treatment of the new disease “grantgore” is mentioned elsewhere.

In addition to the surgeons who practised in the burghs, there were at this time royal surgeons who had country districts placed under their care, and who were paid by lands or fees from the Crown revenues much in the same way as parish doctors now receive allowances from the local authorities. Thus, Henry Railston had an annual fee of six merks from the rents of Kere Lawmond and Little and Meikle Lupas in Bute during his life, for the surgical art which he rendered at the instance of the King and Queen. Another royal surgeon, John Watson, received £21 1s. 6d. annually, though this was later reduced to £14 1s. At a slightly later date, Robert Kynnaired, the King's surgeon, received £20 annually, which was paid half by the Treasurer and half by the Comptroller, and John Murray, the King's barber (barbitonsor) received £10.⁴

For diseases requiring great skill, it appears that resort was made at this time to Paris. Thus Patrick Panther, the King's Secretary, went there when ill and died of fever; and Henry Sinclair, Bishop of Ross, went to Paris for a surgical operation.⁵ The fee paid to a Scottish surgeon on one occasion is mentioned as thirty-two shillings.⁶

Sir David Lyndsay, of the Mount, in the following reign, has an amusing poem regarding a jousting between James Watson and Jhone Barbour, servitoris to King James V., which is said to have taken place before the King and Queen, at St. Andrews, on a Whit Monday. It is possible that professional rivalry may have induced these two representatives of the medical profession of the day

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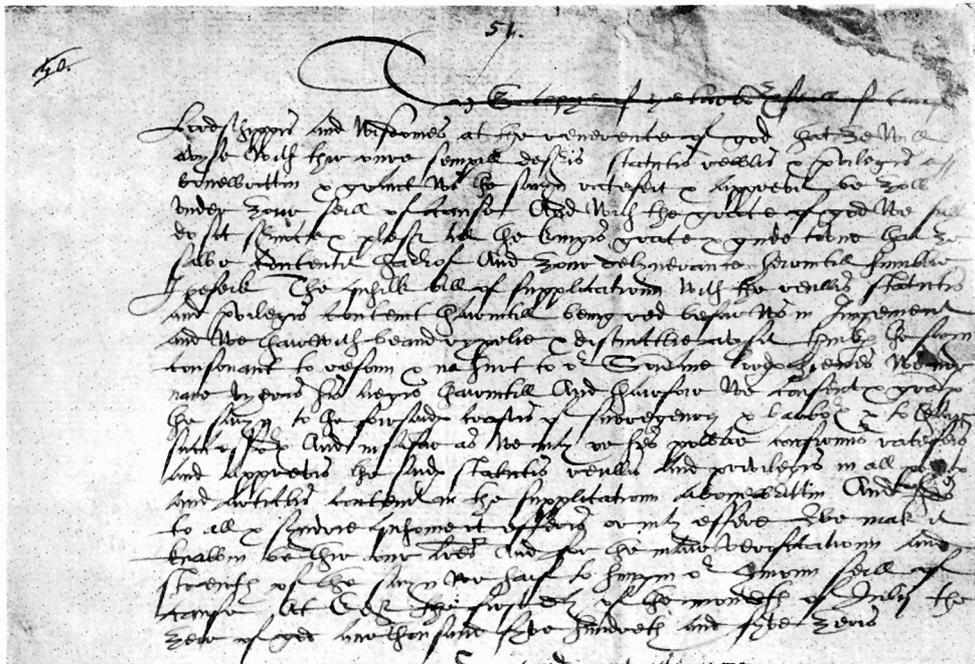
¹ Lindesay of Pitscottie: “Cronicles of Scotland,” Vol. I., p. 237.

² “Epistolæ Reg. Scot.,” Vol. I, p. 119.

³ G. Gregory Smith: “Days of James III.,” London, 1890, p. 110.

⁴ “Exchequer Rolls of Scotland,” Vol. XIV, pp. 81, 466 and 467.

⁵ “Exchequer Rolls of Scotland,” Vol. XIV, Pref. p. cxvi. ⁶ Op. cit., p. 362.



SEAL OF CAUSE (Page III)

to engage in combat before the Court. In any case, Lyndsay turns their strife into a ridiculous affair:—

“ James was ane man of greit intelligence,
 Ane medicinar ful of experience;
 And Johne Barbour, he was ane nobill leche,
 Cruikit carlingis, he wald gar thame get speche.”

At the first onslaught with lances, James would have been struck down if John through fierceness had not happened to faint, and, at the same time, John would have suffered severely had not James unfortunately broken his lance among the horses' feet. After the unsuccessful charge with lances, they drew their swords, but each missed his blow at the other, and thereafter they took to boxing-gloves and “dang at utheris facis.” Finally, they gave up for weariness without shedding blood. Perhaps in this poem a sly reference may be traced to John Watson, who was one of the royal surgeons, and Thomas Leche, a well-known surgeon of the time.¹

The Seal of Cause, granted by the Town Council to the surgeons and barbers in the year 1505, was probably given at the instance of King James IV., and in

¹ Sir David Lyndsay's Works: Ed. by Laing, Edinburgh, 1879, Vol. 1, p 125.

any case it was confirmed by him in the following year. This document has important contemporary relations. Public dissections had been carried out in most of the Universities in the 14th and 15th centuries (Venice from 1368), but this was the first enactment on the subject in Britain, preceding even the law of Henry VIII. in 1540, by which four bodies of executed criminals were granted to the surgeons and barbers of London. In the latter year, too, Henry VIII. granted to the surgeons and barbers of London privileges very similar to those granted by James IV. to the Edinburgh company in 1506.

In the larger Scottish towns, as in other countries, barbers practised minor surgery. As we have seen, there is a reference as early as 1451 to Barbers in a Guild at Edinburgh. By the year 1505, when various craftsmen were applying to the Town Council for charters, the barbers, together with the surgeons in the city, united to apply to the Provost, Baillies and Council of the Burgh for recognition of the two callings joined in a single guild.

It is evident from the application, in which two crafts are mentioned throughout, that along with barbers there existed at this time a superior calling of surgeons. The surgeons presumably were too few in number to form a guild of their own, and thus united with the barbers just as at Florence, in the previous century, the physicians had included in their guild artists and literary men, who contributed much to the fame and standing of the guild. The two crafts had for some time maintained an altar, dedicated to St. Mungo, in the Church of St. Giles. This was supported by the entrance charges to the guild and a weekly subscription of one penny. The petition asked that their yearly election of a churchmaster and oversman (in later years called the Deacon) should be recognised by the Town Council; that the Guild should have the sole right of practising the crafts of the surgeon and barber within the burgh, and that they should have the right to examine everyone presenting himself for entrance to the Guild in his knowledge of anatomy, complexion of the body, position of the veins, domination of the signs of the zodiac, and ability to read and write. They also petitioned for the body of a criminal to anatomise once in the year. The entrance fee was to be five pounds, together with a dinner by the candidate to the already-existing masters of the craft. The Guild was also to have a chaplain to perform daily services before their altar and an officer to collect the dues and precede them in processions. Another privilege craved was that the members of the crafts should have the sole right to manufacture and sell aqua vitæ within the burgh.¹ These petitions were granted by the Town Council at Edinburgh on the 1st of July, 1505, and were ratified in the following year by King James IV.

¹ This was not so great a privilege in days when the national drink of Scotland was "aill," as it might now appear, but if the monopoly to make and sell whisky in Edinburgh had not been allowed to lapse, the Royal College of Surgeons would to-day be one of the wealthiest corporations in the country.

The books available at this time for the study of anatomy were small compendiums, like those of Mondino of Bologna and Henri de Mondeville of Paris and Montpellier, and it is quite probable that copies of these had been brought to Scotland.

Vesalius, whose "De Fabrica Humani Corporis" (1543) is regarded as the commencement of anatomical renaissance, was not born till 1514, and the desire for anatomical study in Edinburgh is, therefore, independent or influenced from Continental sources, and is a proof of the high aspirations of the 15th century medicine in Scotland. The Seal of Cause runs as follows in the "Records of the Town Council":—

1 JULY, 1505

SEAL OF CAUSE TO BARBERS

"To all and sindrie to quhais knaulege thir present letteris sall cum, the prouest baillies and counsale of the burgh of Edinburgh, greiting in God eurlisting: Witt [*know*] your vniuersities thatt the day of the dait of thir presentis comperit befor me, sittand in iugement in the Tolbuth of the said burgh, the kirkmaister and brether of the Sueregianis and Barbouris within the samyn, and presentit till me thair bill and supplicatioun desyring ws for the louing of God, honour of oure Souerane Lord and all his liegis, and for worschip and policy of this burgh, and for the gude reull and ordour to be had and maid amangis the saidis craftis in tymes to cum, thatt we wald grant and consent to thame the privilegis reullis and statutis contenit in thair said bill and supplicatioun quhilk efter follows:

"To yow my lordis provest baillies and worthy counsall of this gude tovne, richt humble meins and schawis your daylie servitouris the kirkmaister and brether of Chirurgionis and Barbouris within this burgh, that quhair [*where*] we beleve itt is weill knawen till all your wisdomis quhow thatt we vphald ane altar situat within your Colledge Kirk of Sanct Geill in the honour of God and Sanct Mongow our patrone, and hes na importance to vphald the samyn bot oure sober oulkie [*weekly*] penny and vpsettis [*entrance fees*], quhilk ar small in effect till sustene and vphald oure said altar in all necessar thingis convenient thairto, and because we ar and ever was of gude mynde till do this gude tovne all the steid plesour and service than we can or may, baith in walking and warding stenting [*assessing*] and bering of all vther portabill chaarges within this burgh at all tymes, as vther nichtbouris and craftis dois within the samyn, we desyre at your lordship and wisdomes till [*to*] geve and grant to ws and oure successouris thir reulis statutis and privilegis vndir written, quhilkis [*which*] ar consonant to resoun, honour till oure Souerane Lord and all his lieges, proffeitt and lowabill to this gude tovne: In the first, that we micht have yeirliche chosin amangis ws ane kirkmaister and ourisman [*overman*] to quhome the haill brether of the craftis foirsaid sall obey for thatt yeir: Item, that na maner of persoun occupie nor vse ony poyntis of our saidis craftis of Surregenie or Barbour craft within this burgh bott gif [*unless*] he be first frieman and burges of the saym, and thatt he be worthy and expert in all the poyntis belangand the saidis craftis diligentlie and avysitlie examinait and admittit be the maisters of the said craft for the honorabill seruyng of oure Souerane Lord his liegis and nychtbouris of this burgh, and als [*also*] that euerie man that is to be maid freman and maister amangis ws be examit and previt in thir poyntis following, thatt is to say, that he knaw anotamell [*anatomy*], nature and complexion of euery member humanis bodie, and inlykewayes he knaw all the vaynis of the samyn, thatt he may mak flewbothomell [*phlebotomy*] in dew tyme, and als thatt he knaw in quhilk [*which*] member the signe hes domination for the tyme, for euery man aucht to knaw the nature and substance of euery thing thatt he werkis,

or ellis he is negligent; and that we may have anis [*once*] in the yeir ane condampnit man efter he be deid to mak antomell of, quhairthraw we may haif experience, ilk ane to instruct vtheris, and we sall do suffrage for the soule; and that na barbour, maister nor seruand, within this burgh hantt [*practise*] vse nor exerce the craft of Surregenrie without he be expert and knaw perfytelie the thingis abouewritten: and quhat person sal happin to be admittit frieman or maisteris to the saidis craftis, or occupis ony poynt of the samyn, sall pay at his entry for his vpsett [*entrance fee*] fyve pundis vsuall money of this realme of Scotland to the reparatioun and vphalding of oure said altar of Sanct Mongow for deuyne [*divine*] seruice to be done thairatt, with ane dennar to the maisteris of the saidis craftis at his admissioun and entres amangis ws; exceptand that every frieman maister of the saidis craftis ane of his lawful gottin sonniss to be frie of ony money payment, except the dennar to be maid to the maisteris efter he be exemit and admitted be thame as said is: Item, that na maisteris of the said craft sall tak ane prenteis or feit [*hired*] man in tyme cuming to vse the Surregeane craft without he can baith wryte and reid, and the said maister of ony of the saidis craftis that takis ane prenteis sall pay at his entres to the reparatioun of the said alter twenty schillingis; and that na maister of the said craft resset [*steal away*] nor ressave [*receive*] ane vther maisteris prenteis or seruand quhill [*till*] the ische [*end*] of his termes be run, and quha that dois in the contrair thairof, as oft as he failyies, sall pay xx s. to the reparatioun of the said alter but [*without*] fauouris. Item, every maister that is resaut frieman to the said craft sall pay his oulkie penny with the priestis meit as he sall happen to cum about, and every seruand that is feitt [*hired*] man to the maisteris of the said craft sall pay ilk oulk [*week*] ane half-peny to the said alter and reparatioun thairof; and that we haif powar to cheise [*choose*] ane chaiplane till do devyne seruice daylie at our said altar at all tymes quhen the samyn sall vaik [*be vacant*], and till cheis ane officiar till pas with ws for the ingathering of oure quarter payment and oulkie pennies, and to pass befor ws on Corpus Christy day and the octauis thairof, and all vther generall processionis and gatheringis, siclike as vtheris craftis hes within this burgh; and that ane of the maisteris of the foirsaid craftis, with the chaiplane and officiar of the samyn, pas at all tymes neidfull lift [*collect*] and rais the saidis quarter paymentis fra every persoun that aw the samyn, and gif ony dissobeyis that we may poynd [*seize*] and distrenye [*distrain*] thairfoir all tymes haifand ane officiar of the tovne with us: Item, that na man nor freman of the said craft purches ony lordschip incontrair [*contrary to*] the statutis and rewlis abouewritten, in hindering or skaithing [*damaging*] of the craftis foirsaidis or commoun weill thairof, vnder the payne of tynsall [*loss*] of thair friedomes. Item, that all the maisteris friemen and brether of the said craft reddelie obey and cum to thair kirkmaister at all tymes quhen thay sal be requyritt thairto be the said officiar for to heir quarter comptis [*accounts*], or till avyse for ony thing concernyng the commoun weill of the saidis craftis, and quha thatt disobeyis sall pay xx s. to the reparatioun of the said altar; and that na persoun man nor woman within this burgh mak nor sell ony aquavite within the samyn except the saidis maisteris brether and friemen of the saidis craftis vnder the pane of escheit of the samyn but fauouris. Beseking heirfoir your lordschippis and wisdomes at the reuerence of God that ye will avyse with thir oure sempill desyris statutis rewlis and privilegis abouewritten, and grant ws the samyn ratefeit and apprevit be yow vnder your seill of cause, and with the grace of God we sall do sic seruice and plesour to the Kingis grace and gude tovne that ye salbe contentit thairof, and your deluyuerance heirintill humble I besaik.

“The quhilk bill of supplicatioun with the reullis statutis and privilegis contentit thairentill being red befor ws in judgement, and we thairwith beand ryplie [*fully*] and distinctlie avysit, thinkis the samyn consonant to resoun and na hurt to our Souerane Lordis Hienes, ws, nor nane vtheris his liegis thairintill, and thairfoir we consent and grantis the samyn to

the foirsaidis craftis of Surregenry and Barbouris and to thair successouris, and in sa far as we may or hes powar, confirmis ratefeis and appreis the saidis statutis reullis and privilegis in all poyntis and articlis contenit in the supplicatioun abouewritten; and to all and syndrie quhome it efferis [*concerns*] or may effere we mak it knawin be thir our lettres; and for the mair verificatioun and strenth of the samyn we haif to hungin [*appended*] our commoun seill of cause, at Edinburgh, the first day of the moneth of July the yeir of God ane thousand fyve hundreth and fyve yeris."¹

After the surgeons and barbers had obtained the Seal of Cause, various enactments were made from time to time confirming or extending the privileges granted by this. It is convenient to summarise these here.²

The Seal of Cause was confirmed by James IV. under the Privy Seal at Edinburgh on the 13th October, 1506.

Mary, Queen of Scots, again confirmed this, and exempted the surgeons along with doctors of medicine from bearing armour in raids and wars, as well as from sitting on inquests or assizes in criminal or civil actions. This edict was made at Edinburgh on the 11th of May, 1567.

James VI. again ratified all the privileges and confirmed Queen Mary's letter of exemption on 6th June, 1613.

The Town Council passed an Act forbidding any who had not been duly approved by the surgeons from practising the art of surgery within the burgh, on 10th September, 1641.

An Act of the Scottish Parliament, in favour of the surgeons and barbers of Edinburgh, ratifying all their privileges and giving the Deacon and Masters of the surgeons the power to take and apprehend all persons exercising the surgical art who were not freemen of the craft, and to fine them £20 Scots for contravention, was passed on 17th November, 1641.

An Act of the Town Council, confirming the rights conveyed by the above-mentioned Act of Parliament, mentioning that the apothecaries were not exempt from these, and making an attempt to define the conditions which, naturally, called for the surgeon's art, was passed on 27th June, 1655.

An Act of the Town Council, regulating the practice of apothecaries and surgeon-apothecaries in the burgh of Edinburgh, and reaffirming that no one should be admitted to practise the art of apothecary unless he had been examined by members of this body, was passed on 25th February, 1657. In this pronouncement it is distinctly stated that there is no intention of erecting the apothecaries into a corporation, but that the arrangement is merely made for the improvement of the apothecaries' art and the good of the people.

¹ "Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403-1528," pp. 101-104.

² See "Collection of Royal Grants and other Documents relative to the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh," Edinburgh, 1818.

An Act of the Scottish Parliament, in favour of the surgeons and barbers in relation to the art of pharmacy, confirming all previous privileges to this incorporation and joining them with the brotherhood of the surgeon-apothecaries and apothecaries in powers to search out irregular practitioners and fine them, was passed on 22nd August, 1670.

The Scottish Parliament ratified a gift and patent granted by King William and Queen Mary, in favour of the surgeons and surgeon-apothecaries, adjusting some of the differences between them, confirming their privileges and providing that their privileges should be nowise hurtful or prejudicial to the erection of the Royal College of Physicians, and this was passed on 17th July, 1695.

A declaration by the Royal College of Physicians, adjusting differences with the surgeons in Edinburgh regarding the practice of pharmacy by the latter, was made on 22nd July, 1695.

An Act of the Town Council of Edinburgh, in favour of the surgeon-apothecaries and apothecaries mentions on 24th June, 1696, that very few of this old fraternity are now living.

An Act of the Town Council of Edinburgh, in favour of the apothecaries and surgeon-apothecaries on 9th December, 1696, mentions that several persons within the burgh are practising the art of apothecaries and keeping open shops without any warrant, and forbids them to do so until they have made application for an examination by the visitors of the fraternity.

The Charter of Erection of the Guild of Surgeons into a Royal College of Surgeons at Edinburgh, conceding them new privileges, was granted under the Great Seal by George III., on 12th May, 1778.



SEAL OF TRINITY HOSPITAL
Before the Reformation