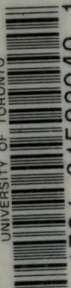




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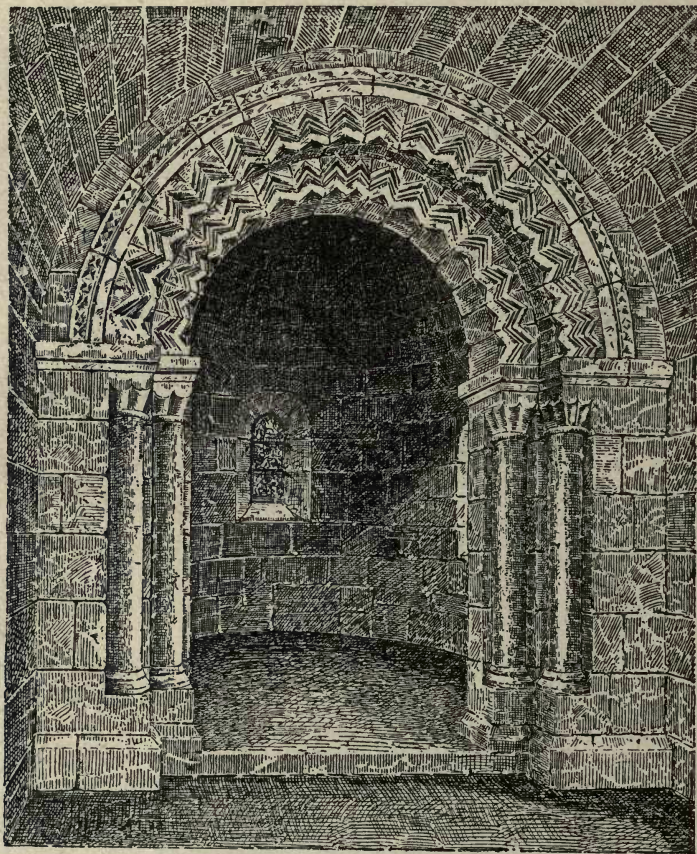


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LIFE OF
ST. MARGHRET
QUEEN OF SCOTLAND



THE LIFE OF ST MARGARET.

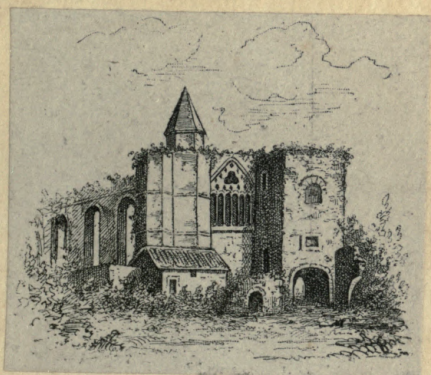


ST MARGARET'S ORATORY IN EDINBURGH CASTLE.

LIFE
OF
ST. MARGARET
QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

BY
TURGOT, BISHOP OF ST ANDREWS

Translated from the Latin by
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THE FRATERY OF DUNFERMLINE ABBEY.

EDINBURGH: WILLIAM PATERSON

MDCCCLXXXIV

1884

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The Royal Palace appears to have been much enlarged and thoroughly repaired about 1540. Large mullioned windows were introduced into the original architecture. The present upper storey with bay windows was then added to the building. The west wall overlooking the glen is 205 feet in length.

III. ST MARGARET'S TOMB, DUNFERMLINE ABBEY . 22

In 1250 the remains of St Margaret were transferred from the old original tomb, in the now western church, to the splendid new tomb specially erected to receive them in the "Lady Aisle" of the then recently-built choir. From 1250 to 1560, *lights* were kept perpetually burning before this tomb, as also on each side of the shrine, of which frequent mention is made in the *Register of Dunfermline*. This tomb appears to have been destroyed by the reformers on the 28th of March, 1560, or by the falling of the walls shortly after that period. All that now remains is the double plinth of a limestone, in dilapidated condition, now outside the area of the present church (on the east). On the upper plinth are still to be seen six circular indentures, from which rose "*six slender shafts of shapely stone,*" that supported a highly-ornamented canopy. In the centre of the second or upper plinth stood St Margaret's shrine. (*E. Henderson, "Annals of Dunfermline,"* p. 86.)

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It is situated but a short distance up the glen from the royal abode. According to tradition, St Margaret often resorted there for private devotion. The custom of retiring for a time to a cave was very common among the British and Scottish Saints. (Cf. "*Historians of Scotland*," vol. v., p. 345.)



INTRODUCTION.

THE great loss sustained by the English in the death of Harold was their deprivation of a national leader.

Harold's brothers had fallen with him in the field at Senlac. Of his sons no mention was ever made. Once more men looked to the royal line, and the Ætheling Edgar, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, whilst still a boy, was chosen king. Such a leader did but weaken the national cause; and no sooner did William approach the city of London than all opposition faded away. The northern Earls, Edwin and Morkar, would hazard nothing, and, dismayed by William's advance, made haste to retreat northwards. The bishops, after a brief display of resistance, counselled submission to

him, and at Christmas his coronation finally made him King of England.

Thus ended the Saxon's main struggle for freedom. But the country was by no means conquered. East of a line from Norwich to Dorset, William was king. All north and west of that was yet to be won. The English, however, felt that they were almost conquered, and the schemes they formed for their deliverance were wild and desperate. The signal for a general revolt came from Swegen, King of Denmark, on the appearance of his fleet in the Humber in 1068. All northern, western, and south-western England rose as one man. The outbreak was heralded by the storming of York, and by the slaughter of three thousand Normans who formed its garrison. The news of this massacre reached William as he was hunting in the forest of Dean, and, in a wild outburst of wrath, he swore to avenge himself on the North. But wrath went hand-in-hand with the coolest statesmanship. The real enemies to be disposed of were the Danes. These William

bought off, and then turning upon the disorganised rebels, he defeated them in detail by a series of masterly marches. The English submitted, and left the Normans undisputed masters of the kingdom. Edgar the Ætheling, with his mother Agatha, his sisters Margaret and Christina, and the last relics of the English nobility,¹ resolved to sail for Wearmouth, and to seek a shelter at the court of Malcolm, King of Scotland. They could hardly have expected to find the man who was to have been their host, in the very act of ravaging

¹ These were the English Thanes : Archill, the great Northumbrian Thane, to whom Malcolm granted large territories in Dumbarton, compensating the spoliation he had sustained from the Conqueror : Merlesweyn, Siward-Barn, Alfwin, all of whom can be recognised as landed men under Malcolm, and whose descendants subsequently appear high on the roll of Scotland's territorial aristocracy. Tradition also mentions the families of Lyndesay, Vaux, Ramsey, Lovel, Towers, Preston, Sandiland, Wisheart, Soulis, Maxwell, Crichton, Giffard, Maule, Leslie and Borthwick, established in the Scottish dominions during Malcolm's reign. (Sir Francis Palgrave, "History of England and Normandy," vol. iv., p. 335. Cf. Hailes, "Ann. Scot.," vol. i., pp. 7, 8 : the "Scots Compendium," etc.)

their native country ; but his savage occupation in no way lessened his friendly feelings towards them. He met them in person, he gave them the most hearty reception, and bade them dwell in his realm as long as it might please them.¹ They sailed towards Scotland ; he went on with the harrying of Northumberland. For while he was still at Wearmouth, news had been received that Gospatric, William's earl in Northumberland, had burst into Malcolm's Cumbrian province, had devastated the land with fire and sword, and had returned with great spoil to the old fortress of the Northumbrian kings at Bambrough, which he held as his headquarters. When the news of Gospatric's inroad into Cumberland was brought to Malcolm, he was

¹ Edgar and his suite were not unknown to the Scottish king. Deprived of his father's protection in early youth "Malcolm grew up into manhood under the Confessor's benign protection, his benefactor and his suzerain, standing before the Confessor's throne, consorting with the Confessor's knights, sitting at the Confessor's table." (Sir Francis Palgrave, "History of England and Normandy," vol. iv., p. 311.)

filled with wrath, and issued orders such as William never gave. From that day forward none of English race were to be spared; the remnant that the Norman had left were to pay for the exploit of their Earl by death or hopeless slavery. The word was given, and it was carried out to the letter by the ruthless marauders to whom it was addressed. The old men and women were slaughtered, as Simeon of Durham puts it, like swine for the banquet.¹ Young men and maidens, and all who were of age and strength to be useful in slavery, were driven in fetters to the land of bondage.² Many sank through fatigue, some of them never to rise again; those in whom life was left found no pity, but were driven on all the more unsparingly at the ruthless bidding of Malcolm. Thus, we are told, was Scotland filled with English slaves of either sex. There was not a village, there was not even a house so poor but could boast of some English captive held in thralldom.³

¹ "Simeonis Dunelmensis Opera," p. 88, Surtees Society.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

While Malcolm was thus making his fearful march homewards, rich with the human spoil of noble England, the English exiles had reached Scotland in safety by sea. Some of the party soon returned to share the dangers of the insurgents at Ely.¹ But the Ætheling and his family paid Malcolm a longer visit, and Margaret, the sister of Edgar, was now entreated by the King to accept his hand. Both the sisters of Edgar, however, were inclined to a religious life.² Margaret, her brother and all her companions, at the first utterly refused to hearken to the king's suit. But the love of Malcolm was not to be withstood. "He dealt with her brother till he said Yea; for in truth he durst not say otherwise, seeing they had come into Malcolm's power."³ "It was," says Mr Freeman, "a good day for Malcolm and for Scotland when Margaret was

¹ Freeman, "History of the Norman Conquest," vol. iv., p. 468.

² Christina became Abbess of an English monastery.

³ "Chron. Wig.," 1067. The marriage took place about 1070. Cf. E. Freeman, vol. iv., appendix B.B., p. 782.

persuaded or constrained to exchange the easy self-dedication of the cloister for the harder task of doing her duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call her.¹ Margaret became the mirror of wives, mothers, and queens, and none ever more worthily earned the honours of Saintship. Her gentle influence reformed whatever needed to be reformed in her husband, and none laboured more diligently for the advance of temporal and spiritual enlightenment in her adopted country. . . . There was indeed no need for Margaret to bring a new religion into Scotland, but she gave a new life to the religion which she found existing there. She became the correspondent of Lanfranc, and her life was written by the

¹ No royal marriage was ever more important in its results for England. "It was through Margaret that the old kingly blood of England passed into the veins of the descendants of the Conqueror. The tree returns to the root when Henry the First marries Matilda the daughter of Margaret; it bears leaves at the birth of her children." (E. Freeman, "History of the Norman Conquest," vol. iii., p. 12.)

holy Prior and Bishop Turgot.¹ It is one of the most interesting pieces that we have as a personal and ecclesiastical biography.”² As one of our most distinguished Scotch writers truly observes:—“There is perhaps no more beautiful character recorded in history than that of Margaret. For purity of motives, for an earnest desire to benefit the people among whom her lot was cast, for a deep sense of religion and great personal piety, for the unselfish performance of whatever duty lay before her, and for entire self-abnegation, she is unsurpassed, and the chroniclers of the time³ all bear testimony to her exalted character.”⁴

Turgot's Memoir of St Margaret is the only authentic account we have of her life. “My

¹ Turgot, Prior of Durham, was consecrated Bishop of St Andrews at York on the 1st August 1109; he died on 31st of August 1115.

² E. Freeman, “History of the Norman Conquest,” vol. iv. p. 510.

³ “Orderic Vital,” b. viii. c. 20; “Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,” Thorpe's edition, vol. ii. p. 172.

⁴ W. F. Skene, “Celtic Scotland,” vol. ii. p. 344.

evidence," says Turgot, "is especially trustworthy, since (thanks to her great and familiar intercourse with me) I am acquainted with the most part of her secrets." As the late Dr Forbes truly remarks, "there is an atmosphere of calm unexcited truthfulness about the narrative, as well as an absence of the mythical, which commends it to us as the work of an eminent truth-loving man, and the incidental allusions to the current history bear the test of all that we know of the times."¹

It is also "full of instructive notices of the state of the Scottish Church and kingdom at the epoch of the Norman conquest of England, and *it supplies us with the first really authentic history of Scotland* after the notices in Adamnan and Bæda, The Pictish Chronicle, and the Book of Deer."²

For the following translation of the life gene-

¹ Dr A. Penrose Forbes, "Calendars of the Scottish Saints," p. 390.

² *Ibid.*, p. 386.

rally ascribed to Turgot we have used the Latin text printed in the *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. ii., 101 (10th June). Papebroch, who edited it, contends that it was written by Theodoric. His arguments, however, do not seem to us very conclusive. According to Lord Hailes, and other writers, it is probable that Theodoric is either another name for Turgot, or that the name of Theodoric has been prefixed to the Saint's life instead of Turgot by some copier.¹

¹ Of the "Life of Queen Margaret" but one copy exists in manuscript in this kingdom, in a folio volume on vellum, of the latter part of the twelfth century, Cotton, Tiberius, D. III., which was much injured by the great fire in the British Museum. The same life is printed in the *Acta Sanctorum*, in Pinkerton's *Lives of Scottish Saints*, in the publications of the Surtees Society (1868). An abridgment exists in the MS. Cotton. Tiberius, E. 1, a folio in double columns, also injured by fire, and dates from the beginning of the fourteenth century.

On the question of the authorship of this work, see the preface to "Simeonis Dunelmensis Opera," Surtees Society, 1868.