


Royal Dunfermline

THE RUINS
of the
ROYAL PALACE
and
ABB E Y
of
DUNFERMLINE

A
POEM

By Serjeant COCKBURN. R.N.B.F.

Fair Nature's wilds, and winding vales
By Hero's feet oft trod,
Where many a humble pious Monk,
Look'd upwards to his God.

DUNFERMLINE

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1800.

TO

Lieut. General

JAMES HAMILTON, of Murdostoun,

COLONEL

Of His Majesty's Royal Regiment of

NORTH BRITISH FUSILIERS:

The following

POEM

Is, with the utmost respect and submission,
humbly Inscribed by His

Most obedient,

And very humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

THE RUINS

of the

ROYAL PALACE & ABBEY

of

DUNFERMLINE.

=====

No legendary tale of woe
The tender heart to move,
Or fictions wild fantastic lays,
Fill'd with romantic love.

Of Caledonia's royal race,
Who in Dunfermline town;
The regal septre mildly sway'd:
A race of fam'd renown.

And of yon august ruin'd pile
That overhangs the steep,
Where slowly winding flows the Lyne,
With curling eddies deep.

Fair Nature's wilds, and winding vales
By hero's feet oft trod,
Where many a humble pious Monk,
Look'd upwards to his God.

Be these my theme, ye tuneful Nine
Assist my humble verse,
Whilst I the deed of ancient kings,
And warlike chiefs rehearse.

To thee the Muse with willing mind,
A cheerful tribute pays;
Accept O HAMILTON! A Tale,
Of Scotia's early days.

Thus Pittencrief, whose beauteous park
Incloses in its wall,
The tow'ring mount, where proudly shone
King Malcolm's Royal Hall:

Malcolm the Third, of Scottish kings,
The glory and the pride,
Where virt'ous Marg'ret, England's boast,
Became his lovely bride.

The beaut'ous maid, her father's court
By faction's wicked arts,
Was forc'd to leave, and seek repose
And peace, in foreign parts.

The ruffling sails were quickly set,
The vessel plow'd the main:
The willing seamen joyful row'd
Some peaceful shore to gain.

Calm were the winds, serene the air,
Unruffl'd was the sea;
Ah hapless maid! The woe-worn heart
Was only known to thee.

But what avail'd thy silent woe,
Thy sighs and briny tears;
No friendly bosom near to share,
Or calm thy rising fears.

Fair Virtue, Marg'ret, aided thee;
Truth was thy potent guard,
Thy fears forgot, thy toils o'ercome;
These brought their own reward.

The breeze now blew a harsher gale,
More boist'rous was the main;
While Caledonia's rocks appear'd
And disappear'd again.

For many stormy nights and days;
Their bark was rudely toss'd
The seamen weeping stood agast,
And gave up all for lost.

But fear had fled from Marg'ret's heart,
Her mind was all serene;
She firmly still depended on
A Providence unseen.

At length the advent'rous vessel reach'd,
Fair Fortha's rolling tide;
Where Malcolm from his lofty tower,
In peril saw her ride.

He hie'd him down to Fortha's banks,
Attended by his peers;
To give assistance to distress,
And still their anxious fears.

The vessel struck against the rocks,
And soon became a wreck;
The well train'd seamen gain'd the shore,
While Marg'ret keep'd the deck.

When Malcolm reach'd the surfy shore,
And saw fair Marg'ret stand,
He plung'd into the briny wave,
And brought her safe to land.

Say gentle youth, the Princess cry'd
To whom I owe my life?
Or on what friendly shore I'm cast
Am I yet freed from strife?

This friendly shore, that winding Firth,
These hills and dales are mine;
No strife reigns here---What madning rage,
Could hurt that form of thine?

From where the Thames, his mighty stream
Rolls onward to the sea,
My father holds his brilliant court
Alas no more for me.

Fell Discord there uprears her head
And threatens all the land,
Train'd up in peace, my helpless years
Could fury ill withstand.

In search of some fair land, where peace
And harmony reside,
I ventur'd from my native shore,
Upon the heaving tide.

The boist'rous winds, and rolling tide,
Whose raging fury met;
Had drove me here---all things conspire
The wretched to beset.

Forget thy fears, here end thy woes,
In me a friend you'll find:
Thy tender frame ill fuits a sea
Rag'd by tempest'ous wind.

My name is Malcolm, view yon tower
Where I in peace reside,
Fair Scotland owns my regal sway;
Will Marg'ret be my bride?

Thy gen'rous princely heart derserves,
A better far than me;
Yet if that heart sincerely speaks,
Though life I'll follow thee.

With hand in hand the royal pair,
Walk'd to king Malcolm's tow'r,
Th' attending peers, well pleas'd. convey'd
Them to their nupt'al bow'r.

Together long in love and peace
They liv'd. fair Scotland's boast,
And oft they view'd the rocky shore,
Where Marg'ret's ship was lost.

And each revolving year the queen
A festival did keep,
In glad rememb'rance of the day,
She 'scap'd the briny deep.

Dunfermline's blooming maidens gay,
With cheerful smiles did wait,
Bedeck'd in shining white attire,
Before her palace gate.

Like some fair angel from above,
Diffusing joys around;
More green the fields appear'd, the flowers
Sprung fairer from the ground.

Thus Marg'ret look'd. when she approach'd
Her gay attending train,
With whom the joyful spent the day,
On Fortha's flow'ry plain.

This Royal Pair to Scotland dear,
Shall ne'er forgotten be;
While yon bold ruins grace the Lyne,
Or Fortha meets the sea.

She best of queens that e'er adorn'd
Or shar'd a Scottish throne;
And he a chief of warlike mien,
Whose pow'r his foes did own.

But ah ! upon a luckless day,
A chief was sent to tell;
How, when besieging Alnwick's towers,
He fought and bravely fell.

Oh, is he gone ! my princely lord?
If so, fair Marg'ret cry'd
I follow thee, thou best of men,
"Then bow'd her head and died."

Dunfermline Abbey's ruin'd walls,
Surround their lonely grave,
Where several pow'rful monarchs lie
Who laws to Scotland gave.

For here inurn'd king David lies
Of most religious name;
The founder of this Abbacy,
Extensive in domain.

Two Alexanders, first, and third,
Great Edgar known to fame,
Malcolm the fourth, and Etheldride
Of Fife, the mighty Thane.

But chiefly thou, great hero Bruce,
Thy mortal part lies here,
All but thy bold intrepid heart,
For nought that heart did fear;

Thy vow religious well thou kept
To visit Holy Land,
Thence Douglas, chieftain, bore thy hear;
A trophy in his hand.

That heart which never fear'd a foe,
Lies in an urn of gold;
Within Jerus'lem's sacred walls,
As Fame the tale has told.

Here liv'd and reign'd with gentle sway,
Of Stuart's might race;
Both kings, and queens, by all belov'd,
Adorn'd with princely grace.

The beaut'ous princess here was born,
From whom Great GEORGE our King,
And his forefathers, lineally;
Illustrious race did spring.

Charles the royal martyr, here
First drew his infant breath,
Betray'd by base republicans
He calmly met his death.

'Twas then a black deceitful crew,
Destroy'd the nation's peace;
Be wife ye Britons---all is fled,
Should regal pow'r once cease.

So far'd the prince, who lately rul'd
In yon disorder'd land;
By dread convulsions wreath'd, her state
In tott'ring ruins stand.

A proud usurping Stranger reigns
With bold tyranic sway,
Where Bourbons mild illustrious race,
Shin'd glorious as the day.

Ah ! thou once fam'd gay land of peace,
Where splendid honours shone;
Thy pride, thy glory, and thy state,
And all thy taste is gone.

Had ye rever'd your lawful king,
And own'd his peaceful sway,
By false philosophy, your minds
Had ne'er been led astray.

Reform the whole, vain thought indeed!
First cleanse the several parts:
A general purity's best gain'd
When each reforms their hearts.

Right well I ween that perfect forms,
By man can ne'er be found:
What nearest heavenly order is,
On earth should most abound.

One King in Heaven supremely reigns,
And guides the mighty whole,
By correspondence, kings on earth
Should o'er the nations rule.

A Danish queen protection fought
From Scotia's Thistle true,
And here her royal palace shone,
Refulgent to the view.

When personages so renown'd
Once fair Dunfermline grac'd,
Say, why in ruins, fall you tow'rs,
Or why so much defac'd.

Yon tow'ring spire and cloister'd walls
Alone remaining tells,
Where many reverend holy men
Lived in their peaceful cells.

Oft has their early maten bell
Arous'd the neighb'ring swain,
To tend his flock, or till the glebe,
Or yoke the pond'rous wain.

Oft did the cheerful voice of praise
Within these walls resound,
Attun'd by heavenly choral strains
From the deep organ's sound.

Here broken spirits, grief-worn hearts,
Weigh'd down with loads of woe,
Return'd with joyful hearts, and light
As is the bounding roe.

Thou heav'nly dame, religion mild,
With held up on the view,
Thine influx pure, elates the mind.,
And forms the man anew.

Thy varied outward forms, and shapes,
Precludes not inward grace,
Thy spirit pure, remains the same,
The same thy cheerful face.

Edward the first, a ruthless prince,
And his fierce warrior train,
Destroy'd these sacred, beauteous walls,
Ne'er to be rear'd again.

Yon Palace walls, where Scotia's kings
In native splendor shone,
Have felt the mould'ring hand of time,
And all their beauty's gone;

Yet what remains, excites the mind
To muse on ages past,
Ages that never can return,
And times too good to last.

Times when the peasants wond'ring eyes
Dunfermline's grandeur view'd,
Where mighty monarch's held their courts,
And chiefs their leagues renew'd.

Its beaut'ous site, extensive view
Can fearcely equall'd be,
Not Windsor's lofty turrets bold,
Dunfermline rivals thee.

What tho' the Thames thro 'Sylvan groves
Winds his majestic way,
Thy Fortha's streams more bold appears,
Her flow'ry banks as gay.

What tho' Lud's lofty spires and tow'rs,
Grace Thames's flowing tide,
Edina's loftier turrets shine
On Fortha's hilly side.

What though your ancient hero's now
Live only but in name,
Ye still can boast of valiant chiefs,
Well known to modern fame.

Thine MITCHELL---well thy country's praise
Thy noble deeds have won;
Thy fame shall last, while this dense orb
Rolls round yon fiery sun.

And while Dunfermline town remains
A residence for men,
Some future sage well skill'd in lore,
Of most extensive ken.

Shall, when recounting former times,
And feats of antient fame,
Say; here the gallant chieftain liv'd
Who gain'd a pow'rful name.

With promptitude and manly zeal
From proud Batavia's shore,
Her boasted strength, a potent fleet
From Zuder Zee he tore.

Thus realizing what was plan'd
By Chatham's matchless Son.
The palm of glory off he bore,
And well the wreath has won.

Long may Dunfermline boast with pride,
Her hero 's lengthen'd fame;
And long may Britain find such chiefs
To raise her envy'd name.

FINIS

Let the dull grov'ling critic act his part,
And thow the venom'd rancour of his heart;
I value not his envious snarling spite;
Ye sons of candour, 'tis for you I write.

