

THE SANG SCHOOL IN DUNFERMLINE

By James Moir Webster



Compiled by Sheila Pitcairn and edited by W. T. Johnston

Webster, James Moir (1875-1957)

M.A., B.D., J.P.

Historian.

Educated: Fordyce Academy; King's College, Aberdeen.

Honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity [D.D.], Aberdeen University. (1950)

Minister, North parish, Dunfermline. (20.11.1902)

Chaplain to Volunteer Force during First World War.

Clerk to Dunfermline Presbytery. (1919; demitted 7.9.1948)

Joint Clerk. (1919)

Minister, Carnock. (5.2.1920; demitted 26.8.1945)

Moderator. (1945)

Throughout his life Dr Webster evinced the greatest interest in the historical background of Dunfermline and the immediate surrounding neighbourhood. His literary works included "History of the Parish of Carnock" and more recently, "Dunfermline Abbey." In a tribute to Dr Webster's authorship of the latter work the minister of the Abbey, the Rev. Robert Dollar, B.D., said, shortly after its publication: "He has brought all previous histories of the church up to date—and corrected a great many previous misconceptions." Dr Webster was also responsible for an introduction and notes, in conjunction with Mr A. A. M. Duncan, M.A. (Hons.), lecturer in History, Queen's University, Belfast, to a transcript of the Regality of Dunfermline Court Book, 1531-1538, which was published by the Carnegie Dunfermline Trustees in February 1953. He was also a frequent and informative contributor to *The Dunfermline Press* on a variety of topics related to the history of the burgh and its environs.

In November 1952 his jubilee as an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland was marked when he was the guest of honour at a Presbytery lunch where he was made the recipient of a gift subscribed to by fellow Presbyters. When he received his Doctorate degree from Aberdeen University in 1950 members of the Presbytery and friends in the parishes of Carnock and Dunfermline North presented him with a D.D. hood and cap to mark the honour conferred upon him.

THE SANG SCHOOL IN DUNFERMLINE

By James Moir Webster
(1875-1957)

Part 1

POST REFORMATION SINGING IN SCOTLAND

In the hurly-burly of the Reformation (1560) consideration of education in general, and musical education in particular, was apt to be side-tracked. There was neither time nor money to devote to such purposes; no matter how desirable.

Grammar Schools, which had already come under the control of burghs, continued more or less unaffected. Others, like that of Dunfermline, which, till then, had remained under the control of the monastery, were gradually taken over by church or burgh, or the two of them conjointly. But this naturally took time.



It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that cultivation of the art of music had fallen to so low a level as is sometimes represented. The experience of John Durie, a former monk of Dunfermline, conveys a very different impression.

Though a relative of George Durie, the last abbot of Dunfermline, who was bitterly opposed to the idea of reformation, John Durie turned Protestant and became minister of St Giles, Edinburgh.

For his plain speech concerning some of the leading figures in Court circles he was banished from his charge; but, soon afterwards, "*gat leive to ga ham to his awin flok at Edinbruche; at whase retourning ther was a grait concurs of the haille toun, wha met him at the Nather Bow; and going upe the streit with bear heads and loud voices sang to the praise of God, and testfieing of great joy and consolation, the 124th Psalm: 'Now Israel may say, and that trewlie, &c' till heavin and erthe resoundit.*" (Melville's Diary, 134)

Calderwood, the historian, confirms the story, adding that the number was estimated at 2,000, that the words of the psalm were known to the singers and that they sang the tune in four parts.

Dr. Cameron Lees, minister of St Giles at a later date, writes of it as follows: "*It must have been a stirring spectacle, that great bare-headed multitude singing opposite the door of St Giles that psalm in the rugged metre which has come down to the present day. Few more picturesque scenes have occurred in connection with our church's history. When darkness came down on the town on that memorable night, two or three hundred citizens kept watch at the back of the church for the 'saftie of the ministers', and, though the authorities besought them to go home, they kept their watchfires bright and remained singing psalms till break of day.*"

So far from suggesting a country where acquaintance with sacred music had died out, it rather sets one wondering whether the experience could be repeated in Scotland today. And that was within twenty years of the Reformation.

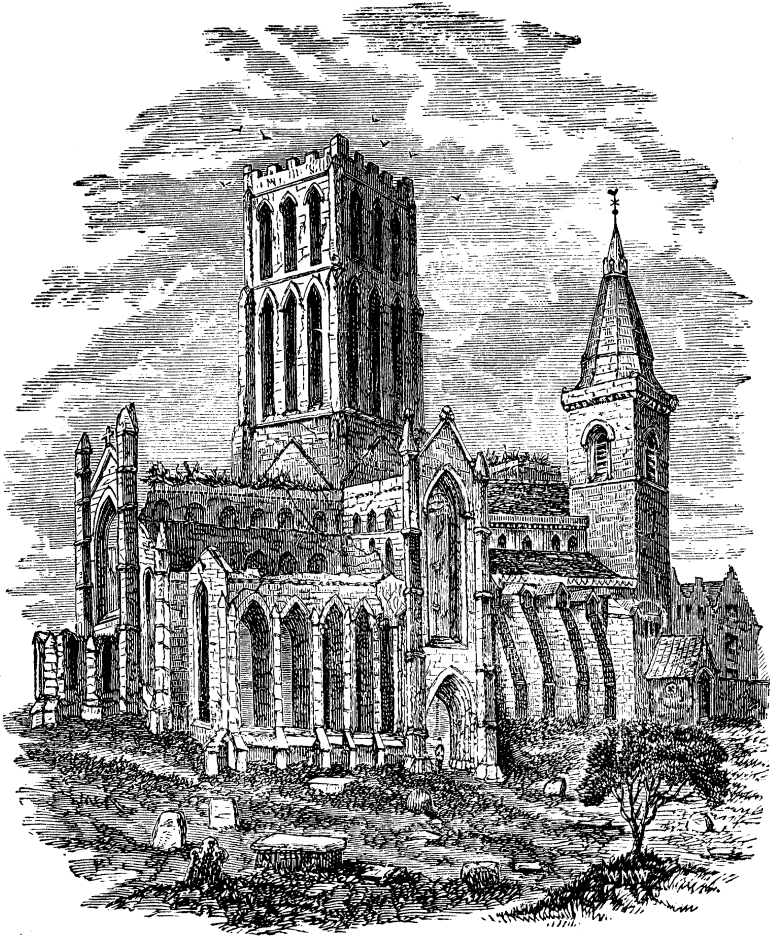
It is not easy to arrive at anything like a just estimate of the comparative contribution to singing in Scotland of the Pre-Reformation and Post-Reformation "*Sang Schules*".

That the standard in the Pre-Reformation school was high is undoubted. Some would even compare it not unfavourably with that of Rome. But, as Dr. Millar Patrick points

out, the obligation to use Gregorian settings and the temptation to experiment with what was even more elaborate and intricate tended to make singing a monopoly of the professional performers. On the other hand one of the features of the Reformation in all countries where it prevailed was the restoration to the common people of the right, and the opportunity, to participate in the singing of God's praise in public worship.

But, despite this clear distinction the two have points in common. For the new school as we have seen, owed a good deal of its success to men who had been trained in the old; and even some of the psalm tunes that for their simple dignity have been regarded as typically Scottish in a Presbyterian sense have been traced to collections of pre-Reformation days.

The one thing clear is that the country was deeply indebted to both of them.



*Ruins of The Abbey Choir, Auld Kirk. Circa A.D. 1670
From Old Sketches and Plans*

Sang Schools, especially in connection with Cathedrals and Abbeys, were an institution of long standing in the Reformation Church, and if there was one in Dunfermline, as in all probability there was, John Angus would have been in charge of it at this time.

With the Reformation these schools came to a sudden end, and, for a time, preoccupation with other matters prevented the Reformers from doing anything about it. There was even a tendency on the part of some of them to think rather lightly of the place of singing in the worship of the Church, and to regard it as something that might possibly be profitable but not really necessary.

The result was that the art of singing soon fell into disrepute, if not into decay. So much so, that Parliament, realising the danger, took steps to ensure that, wherever there were ancient schools, they should be provided with a master sufficient and able for instruction of the youth in the said science of music, as they will answer to His Highness upon the peril of their foundations, and, by way of encouragement, the King's Consort endowed a Sang School in Dunfermline at a cost of £2,000.

So remarkable was the reaction to this move that an edition of the Psalter was in circulation by 1564, to be followed soon by others; and in the preface to the edition printed in Edinburgh in 1635, the first published with the tunes harmonised, Edward Millar, the editor, says: *"I acknowledge sincerely the whole compositions of the parts to belong to the primest musicians that ever this kingdom had, as Dene John Angus, Blackhall, Smith, Peebles, Sharp, Black, Buchan and others, famous for their skill in this kind."* (Reg. K.S., St And.4ln.)

It is impossible to trace all the names here mentioned, but Peebles may safely be identified with David Peebles, said to have been 'ane of the chief musitians of the land', a Canon of St Andrews, who was a contributor to one of the intermediate editions.

Smith, in all probability, is the man referred to by James Melville in his Diary: *"In the years I learned my music ... of the Alexander Smith, servant to the Primarius of our College, who had been treaned up amungis the monks in the Abbey."*

Dene John Angus, almost to a certainty, the Precentor of Dunfermline, was thus quite evidently one of the leading figures in the production of the Scottish Psalter.





Annals of Dunfermline by E Henderson.

Part 2

THE SANG SCHOOL IN DUNFERMLINE

As regards Dunfermline, we are fortunate enough to have some definite information concerning the place of music in the Grammar School in the days following the Reformation.

JOHN ANGUS had been Monastery Precentor for some time before the Reformation and was still in office when the Reformation came. He is also referred to as Almoner in 1566 and 1568, and may have been, besides, Keeper of the Rental Books, for, owing perhaps to shortage of numbers, these two offices seem to have been combined. It is, however, primarily as Precentor that we are interested in this man.

Following the Reformation, John Angus was presented to the Vicarage of Inverkeithing by the Commendator of Dunfermline, 20th August 1562—collated and instituted by the Bishop of St Andrews, 23rd June 1563—Royal Confirmation following 20th May 1565. (History of Inverkeithing by Rev W. Stephen p.272)

He was also Parson of Crieff (Crief secundo) 4th November 1595, when he is mentioned along with his brother, William, Parson of Kirkinner. (Fasti.)

But it is very doubtful if any of these appointments implied the assumption of any parochial duty or responsibility.

Hd. [?] Henrysoun, Master of the Pre-Reformation Song School at St Giles, became not only a Protestant, but Precentor of the Church—apparently with such acceptance that in 1577 he was voted a pension by the town in acknowledgement of his services.

In view of the part he played in the preparation of the Psalter, it is within the bounds of possibility that John Angus stayed on too. But it is no more than a possibility.

When examining a bundle of ancient documents belonging to the family of Dundas of Dundas, Mr Ritchie, of the MSS. Department of the National Library, discovered a personal letter in Latin, dated 1st March 1610, from the Laird of Dundas's son, William, who was then a pupil at the Grammar School, Dunfermline.

There had been, it seems, some sort of Speech Day at the School, to which representatives of the Town Council and “gentlefolk” of the burgh, along with relatives of the scholars, were invited. Six of the pupils were called upon to deliver “orations.” Five of the six—William Dundas being one of them—took for their subject “The School and its Work”, with special reference to “our devoted teacher and our ancient and resurrected school.” *“The sixth”*—the letter goes on to say—*“gave a most delightful and extremely pleasing discourse in praise of music, by way of introduction to that other part of the programme assigned to fellow-pupils ‘who are musicians’. These, according to the letter ‘gave proof of skill in the glorious and most charming art of music in such manner that their very sweet harmony and most delightful concord not only charmed the ears of the audience but, so to speak, compelled our whole school to resound with their melodious singing. Led by their precentor, the rest followed with their special parts, one singing the bass, others the tenor, the treble and the counter-tenor, with such melody that Apollo and the Nine Muses seemed to have been present.’”*

Allowing for the circumstances under which the letter was written and the possibility of a too-favourable estimate of the gifts of the performers, there are one or two things about it that are well worth consideration.

For one thing, it was written on 1st March 1610, whereas Queen Anne's Mortification was not drafted till August and registered in September of that same year—which clearly shows that the art of music was by no means being neglected in the Grammar School even before the Mortification came into effect.



[Queen Anne resolved to give in perpetuity £2,000 from the temporal lordship of the Regality of Dunfermline—which she had received as a wedding gift from her husband—to make provision both for the Grammar School and Sang School at Dunfermline.]

For another, there is this reference to a *Precentor*.

Who was he? The Precentor of the parish church; the Master or Doctor of the Grammar School acting as precentor for the occasion; or the Master of the Sang School? Here we are up against a real difficulty, and one that persists throughout a considerable part of this story—the difficulty of being sure as to the exact office that was held.

The annual payment from the Queen Anne Mortification to the Master of the Sang School was £8: 6: 8. Even with the addition of fees, it was insufficient for a livelihood; so that the holder of the office had generally to look for some other source of revenue.

There were three offices about this time that might be, and often were, conjoined: *Reader, Precentor and Master of the Sang School*.

The institution of the office of Reader was a temporary necessity because of the shortage of qualified ministers immediately following the Reformation. A qualified minister would be given the oversight of several congregations, and, to enable him to meet the obligations involved, he would be given the assistance of one or more Readers, who, if they could not preach, could at least read to a congregation the Scriptures and the prayers prescribed, and perhaps lead the praise, at a salary of something like £15 or £20.

The day came when the office of Reader was no longer needed.

It was formally abolished in 1581. But, strangely enough, the name continued. As we shall see, it was still in use in Dunfermline as late as 1725. But whether it indicated the office of Precentor, or Master of the Sang School, or both, one can never, without further evidence, be quite sure.

Under date 10th March 1623, there is an entry in the Burgh Records dealing with an application by *William Culen*—who was, seemingly, Doctor of the Grammar School—to be allowed to “*instruct bairns in ye airt of musik*.” This must have been one of the periods when there was no Master of the Sang School. The Council agreed to his request and recommended him to the community in view of “*his indigent and hard estait and great burdens*.”

The first official appointment as Master of the Sang School of which we have definite information is that of STEVIN TULLIDEFF (with variations in spelling), who, on 27th November 1626, submitted to the Town Council a Presentation granted him by the Earl of Dunfermline “*for ressaiving him to ye office to be schoolmr of ye airt of musik wtin this toun*.”

The following year, on 1st June 1627, the Council “*appointit Mr Stevin Tullideff Mr of ye Musick Schole that he sall have of everie toun bairne for instructing of ye youth in ye said art the sowm of ten shillings money quarterlie wt qlk pryce the sd Stevin stuid content*.”

This is, presumably, in addition to the annual payment provided by the Queen Anne Mortification, and the minute goes on to add “*The Council relieved him of house rent in time coming*.”

Two years later—30th June 1629—the Council, considering that they have in their own possession “*bewest the school*” “*ane competent hous to learne his bairns in ye airt of musick ... ordains the kie yrof to be offered & delyverit to him to the effect the toun may be freed of paying his hous mail*.”

This is the earliest indication of a building expressly provided as a Sang School and it adds greatly to the interest the information naturally stirs to realise that it adjoined on the west the building which, since at least 7th November 1496, is known to have been used as an extramural Grammar School.

No indication is given as to the house in which he had carried on the work for the previous two years.

Can it have been the house “*bewest the Cross*” at one time used as a Manse by David Ferguson?

To explain: John Row, minister of Carnock, married in 1595 Grizzel, youngest daughter of David Ferguson, first minister of Dunfermline Abbey. Ferguson’s wife having

predeceased him, he left the house in which he had lived to his son-in-law, John Row.

John Row's daughter, Margaret, married Stevin Tullideff, who, as we have seen, became Master of the Sang School in Dunfermline.

Is it unreasonable to suppose that Row, living in the manse at Carnock, and having no need of a house in Dunfermline, may have given the use of it to his daughter and son-in-law?

Another association of John Row with this story is of a much more serious nature.

John Walker, who had been Reader (Precentor) in Dunfermline Abbey since 1604, was still in office when Stevin Tullideff was presented to the office of Master of the Sang School.

What his reaction to the appointment was can only be a matter of conjecture. But the following facts are beyond question.

John Row, though his father-in-law, David Ferguson, had died in 1598, was still in touch with the Abbey congregation, and on very friendly terms with John Moray, minister there at the time we are dealing with—a time when the Church was under Episcopal government.

Both Moray and Row were definitely against the restoration of Episcopacy, and, preaching one Sunday in the Abbey, Row had expressed himself in no uncertain terms on the subject.

Walker, as Precentor, was present and reported to the ecclesiastical authorities the substance of Row's sermon, with the result that action was taken against him, and, had it not been for the friendly intervention of Sir George Bruce of Carnock, the outcome might have been serious for the minister of Carnock. As it was, he was confined for two years to the bounds of his own parish; whilst Moray, the minister of the Abbey, for whom he had been preaching, was deposed.

What were the feelings of the congregation may be gauged by the following extract from the Burgh Records: "*8 June 1621—The Qlk Day C'peirit Mr Jon Walkar, reidar of God's Word at Dunfermline and refusit heireftre to reid ye prayers efternoun in respect he hes no benevolence nor gudwill of ye pepill yrfor.*"

Whether Tullideff had any other source of revenue over and above the Queen Anne Grant and the fees of the pupils one does not know. There is no known record of any. In any case, his tenure of office was not long. It ended 20th December 1630.

One gets the impression that he did not live much longer.

Only one child appears in the Parish Register as having been born to him and Margaret Row—a daughter Grizzel, who married James Hutton, Schoolmaster at Carnock, later deprived of office because of Covenanting activities.

Tullideff's widow, Margaret Row—according to the Fasti—married David Robertson of Muirton of Elginch and thus became great-great-grandmother of Principal Robertson.

The next Master of the Sang School was *Robert Anderson*, who appears to have held office for fifty-six years (1631-1687).

On receipt of a Presentation to the office in his favour, commissioners were sent from the Town Council to the Archbishop of Dunblane—the Church being at the time Episcopal in government—"for trial of his qualifications before the '*musitioners*' at the Chapel Royal at Stirling.

The result is embodied in the following minute: "*21 Feby, 1631—ROBERT*

ANDERSON being convenit before the Abishop of Dunblane, Dane of ye sd. Chapell royall and greatest number of best experienced yrof in ye sd art and they having takin tryall of ye qualification of the sd Rot in ye art of musik and playing upon instruts as be yr testimoniall and approbation subt wt yr hands ... hes fund the sd Rot to be qualifiet and meit to be maist. of the musick scholl and to instruct the youth yrin And yrfor the C'saill hes acceptit & accept ye sd Rot to be Mr of ye Musick Schooll wtin this burgh. "

In the Kirk Session Records, under date 9th June 1646, he is mentioned as *Precentor*, his "*fie*" in that capacity being given as 4 "dollers." On 14th April 1650, he and the "*belman*" appealed for an increase in the fees paid to them—apparently he was also *Keeper of the Registers* for baptisms and marriages. The Parish Register of Dunfermline, about this time, contains no record of deaths. The fees then paid—4/- for baptisms and 6/8 for marriages—were shortly afterwards increased. On 13th August 1680 his fee as "church clerk" (Session Clerk) is given as £6.

In 1665 the Town Council had under consideration "the great prejudice they sustain by paying Mr Anderson as Master of the Musick School and Precentor £80 [Scots] annually, the Mortification being reckoned as yielding 8%, whereas, by Act of Parliament, "annual rents" of the sort should not exceed 6%." It was resolved to adjust payments accordingly and to get Mr Anderson's full discharge.

Following Mr Anderson came JOHN CHRISTIE (1687-1711), Patrick Dykes, Master of the Grammar School, receiving ten merks from the Session for keeping the Kirk Registers during the vacancy in the clerkship.

Of him and his work it is difficult to write with any degree of confidence. He became suspect of errors of doctrine akin to Arminianism and his case had to be referred to the Presbytery.

The Presbytery apparently found against him, but the heritors pressed for his restitution to office. On 8th March 1711, however, it was reported to the Session that the heritors "*had passed from insisting any further to have John Christie reponed*" and desired that Mr John Brand might be Precentor and Session Clerk, if found qualified.

JOHN BRAND (1711-1725)

Apparently Mr Brand was found qualified, for, under date 27th November 1725, there is an entry in the Burgh Records as follows: "*Which day the Council considering that the offices of Music Master and Reader in the church are both vacant, and that it will be for the interest of the town that these two offices be united in the person of one man; also understanding that the Marquis of Tweeddale is willing to present any person that the Council is satisfied with and agreeable to the kirk-session; the Council appointed the two baillies and Charles Chalmer to wait upon the kirk-session and intreat them to concur with the town to find out a man that is sufficiently qualified for both these offices, and that they would join with the Town Council in desiring the Marquis of Tweeddale to advertise it in the Gazett.*"

The ministers in the Abbey at the time were Ralph Erskine and James Wardlaw, and these two were the best of friends.

Soon after they became colleagues, the two of them, according to Dr Chalmers, *formally subscribed a paper of mutual agreement as to the manner in which they were to conduct themselves, with a view to the maintaining of a good understanding betwixt*

them in their collegiate ministry—the particulars of which are minute, curious and judicious—such as, that they would not receive, or entertain, any ill report of one another; no, not from the wife of their bosom, or dearest, or nearest, friend or acquaintance; and, whatever they might hear that would occasion any jealousy, they should not give it any entertainment, till first they had made enquiry thereinto, by a friendly communication for removing any mistakes; and that in all their public administrations, and mutual helpfulness to one another in their work, they should not be under the management of their wives, &c.”

The suggestion that the two offices, *Reader* (or *Precentor*) and *Master of the Sang School*, should be combined was a perfectly reasonable one, and well worth consideration. But the next we hear of it, viz: that the Marquis had, on his own authority, issued a Presentation to the joint offices in quite another matter.

At this distance in time it is not easy to be sure that we are in possession of all the facts. But the trouble, so far as we can judge, seems to have centred on the word “*Reader*.”

The *Reader*, as originally appointed, was paid from the teinds, and it is quite a possibility that one of the reasons for the retention of the name after the office itself came to an end was to secure the continuance of this payment.

In any payment from teinds the Marquis, as Baillie of Regality, would have a definite interest. On the other hand, the Kirk Session had an unquestionable right to consultation in the appointment of a *Precentor*. Hence the displeasure of the ministers at the one-sided action of the Marquis.

So keen was the controversy that there could be no dispensation of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper during that or the following year. The case went to the Court of Session, which decided in favour of the Marquis. But the displeasure of the ministers and congregation was unappeased. They would have nothing to do with a *Precentor* in whose appointment they had no voice.

Confronted with this impasse, the two ministers came to a friendly understanding. When the one preached, the other would *precent*.

It is almost unbelievable, but the arrangement apparently lasted from 1725 till 1734. It cannot have been possible, of course, for both of them to be present on every Sunday for all that time and it is no surprise when we find a reference to John Hart acting as *Precentor* in 1729 and being paid for his services by the Kirk Session. John Hart was a handy man and filled many offices in his time. Beginning as a candidate for the ministry, he had, unfortunately, to appear before the Session on a disciplinary charge and there could be no further progress in that direction. But, later, he was appointed *Presbytery Clerk* and served the church long and faithfully in that capacity. In the year 1705, he served for three months as an *Interim Master* of the Grammar School and, as noted above, he was *Precentor* in 1729.

The long-drawn-out controversy did not really end till 1734 when the Marquis, at an Election time, gave a handsome entertainment to the Magistrates and Council to which he invited the two ministers—and they readily accepted the invitation.

Stout men they clearly were, ready to defend the rights of the congregation, no matter who threatened them, and not afraid to break with use and wont when circumstances called for it.

As one reads the story, one is reminded of another minister of the Abbey, of later date, Allan Maclean – a “*bonnie fechter*” too.

Arrangements had been made for a special service on a Sunday evening in the Burgher Meeting House, and the Provost, himself a Seceder, ordered William Nicol, Mr Maclean's beadle (each minister of the Abbey, at that time, had his own beadle) to ring the Abbey bell for the service. Nicol replied that he could not do so without instructions from the minister. Hearing later that the Provost, if his request was refused, was going to force an entrance into the church to have the bell rung, Nicol reported to Mr Maclean who advised him to lock himself into the church and see that no one did get in. The Provost, however, appeared with a crowd of several hundreds, broke open the porch door, recovered the bell rope which Nicol had removed and had the bell rung.

Nicol himself was badly handled. When he protested and asked for their warrant, the leaders of the mob replied that their "*naves*" [neaves, neives, fists] were their warrant as they were acting on the provost's orders. Dragged down the steeple-stair, through the church and churchyard, hurt and bleeding, he was taken to the Tolbooth and imprisoned.

Both Mr Maclean and Mr Chalmers (Minister of the Second Charge) protested vigorously and the Presbytery issued a series of resolutions. If the Provost accepted these, it was willing to let the matter drop; otherwise the case would have to be dealt with by a civil court.

There could be no question as to who had the right to have the bell rung. By a finding of the Court of Session in an Inverkeithing case (15th February 1642) it was established that heritors—the Town Council was on the list of heritors—were liable to provide a bell and belfry, but the power of regulating the use of the bell for ecclesiastical and religious purposes belonged exclusively to the minister.

The ministers and congregation naturally appreciated very highly the stand made by the beades—the other beadle was not available, but his son accompanied and supported Nicol.

Unfortunately, soon after this, pressure was brought to bear on Nicol by a magistrate to show him favour in respect of a lair in the churchyard. The session, learning of it, took a serious view of what had been done and dismissed him from office.

This was too much for Allan Maclean. He accepted the official dismissal, but retained Nicol's services at his own expense.

The elders protested and declared that the man was not worthy to carry the Holy Book to the pulpit. Maclean said nothing, but arranged with Nicol that he himself would carry the bible to the pulpit. Nicol would follow after him and close the pulpit door.

Brand's successor as Precentor and Master of the Sang School was ALEXANDER SCOTT (1741-1744) of whom we know nothing except that he came from Aberdeen.

He was succeeded by
ANDREW BEVERIDGE (1745-1772)

Like John Hart, Beveridge had intended the ministry. On his appointment as Presbytery Clerk, he is described as "*Preacher of the Gospel and Precentor in Dunfermline.*" But it looks as if he had been "a stickit minister," for he never held a charge. How long he acted as Precentor is not definitely stated. He died in 1772, but for a considerable time prior to his death, his work as Presbytery Clerk was almost entirely done by Mr Fernie, one of the ministers of the Abbey.

From the Presbytery records we learn that ROBERT STEVENSON was Precentor and Master of the Sang School in 1772; but nothing further is known of him.

Next comes

JAMES RANKINE (1819-1849)

According to Ebenezer Henderson, he established in 1819 a school in the Mason Lodge, Maygate, for “teaching English Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Music.” The speculation, he says, turned out unsuccessfully and the school was closed early in 1822.

This is the only reference that can be traced to a building in connection with the Sang School since 1629 when the Town Council gave to Stevin Tullideff for that purpose their house “bewest the Grammar School.” Of how long the building was used for that purpose there is, apparently, no record.

Dr. Chalmers writes of Mr Rankine and his successors as follows:

“Mr James Rankine, from Glasgow, Master of the Song and Precentor in the Abbey Parish Church, admired for his accurate knowledge of sacred music, fine taste, and excellent leadership in the desk, died in 1849 and had a neat monumental stone erected over his grave, by some of his musical friends, bearing the figure of a lyre encircled by wreaths and an inscription.

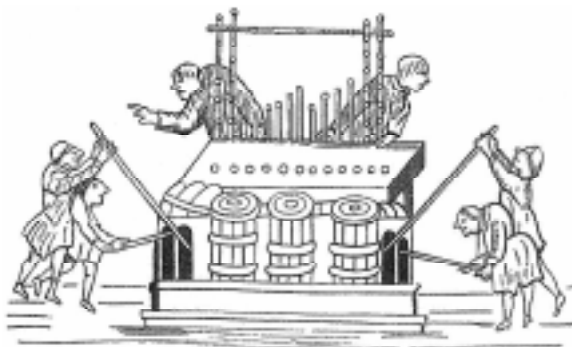
He was succeeded by Mr James Martin, Precentor in Free St George’s Church, Edinburgh, who was inducted June 1849 but survived only about three and a half years.

Various unexpected delays took place in the procuring, appointing and inducting a successor to Mr Martin.

At length Mr William Locke, precentor in St George’s Church, Glasgow, was fixed on at the end of June 1853 and a presentation issued in his favour by the patron, the Marquess of Tweeddale, about a month thereafter. But, in consequence of alterations requiring to be made in the terms of the presentation, the final presentation was not issued till the 21st day of September; and from other causes the induction into office did not take place till the 14th November 1853.

There is no longer a Sang School in Dunfermline, but the Organist of Dunfermline Abbey still receives the grant provided in Queen Anne’s Deed of Mortification (1610) and for so long paid to the Masters of the Sang School.

By 1249 a large organ was erected in Dunfermline Abbey, at the junction of the Old Church with the New Choir, for the daily Abbey service.



Church Organ worked by levers.

Psalter of Edwin, Manuscript volume of 1240 - Cambridge University Library.

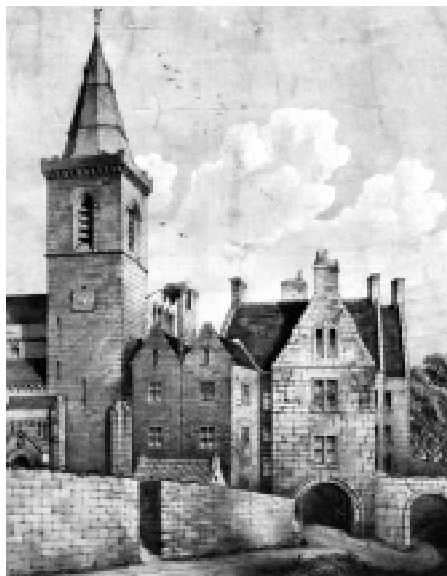
Annals of Dunfermline by E. Henderson, page.79. (The original source has not yet been found).

‘As the Scottish church struggled to establish its Presbyterian identity against Episcopalian pressures from its own ruling monarchs, narrowing itself for self-protection, so did its music narrow down. Psalm 124 arranged in four simple parts by Andrew Kemp in the late sixteenth century is typical. It has its own proper tune and there is still a little rhythmic life in it, but its basic purpose is to be sober and direct and not to confuse the words.

It was not easy for people who had been denied any chance of singing in church suddenly to learn how to do it, so instead of every one of the hundred and fifty psalms being associated with its own tune and no other, a group of tunes known as Common Tunes became popular because you could sing any psalm to them. By the time Edward Millar brought out his great psalter in 1635 there were thirty-one common tunes. Charles I made him Master of the Music in the Chapel Royal.

The tunes were drawn from all over Europe, but some were definitely Scottish—such as *Dunfermline*, possibly written by the ‘*good and meike*’ John Angus of Dunfermline Abbey. It is still sung today. Millar’s Psalter even included some tunes in reports—that is with imitating parts, such as the version he published of Psalm 6.

One might, from this, have reasonably hoped for a revival of sorts, but by the end of the century only fourteen tunes were published with the psalter, so one can guess that the process of learning a wide repertoire of tunes made little headway. People everywhere relied on a precentor to set them off on the right tune at the right pitch and with the right words, seeing many could not read letters, never mind music—so if the precentor was poor, the repertoire was bound to narrow down. There was also a lengthy period of civil war and a lack of the kind of patronage and stability that organised music requires and which the execution of Charles I by the English did not help. &c’. *Scotland’s Music by John Purser: a history of the traditional and classical music of Scotland from earliest times to the present day. Enlarged version. Edinburgh, 2007.*



Queen Anne’s House, demolished 1797, Church, Dormitory, Refectory, &c. 1600.

MORTIFICATION
OF £2000 SCOTS
BY QUEEN ANNE
IN FAVOUR OF
THE GRAMMAR AND
MUSIC SCHOOLS
OF DUNFERMLINE

The following is a copy of the
Deed of Conveyance, viz.:—

*Copy Extract Bond by the Town of Dunfermline, anent
Queen Anne of Dunfermline, her Mortification of £2000 Scots,
whereof the Annual rent of 10 per Cent. be a Fund for a Salary
to the Master of the Grammar and Song Schools of Dunfermline,
dated 24th August, and Registrat 5th September, 1610.*

[At Edinburgh the fifth day of September in the year of god 1610 years]
In presence of ye lords of Counsall comperit Mr Thomas Rollok
Procurator speciallie constitute for James Reid provest Johnne Andersoune and James
Mochrie baillies Johnne Walker deane of gild Padrick Trumbule thesaurar
of the burgh of Dumfermeling David Stewart Johnne Andersoune William Broun
and Andro Bennat four of ye counsell of ye said burgh And gaif in
the band and obligationis under-writtin subscrivet with our hands desiring
the same to be insert and registrat in the buiks of Counsell To have the
streth of ane Decreit of ye Lords thair of with lettres and executiones to be Seild therupoun
In manner enterit The quhilk desir the saidis lords thot reasonable
and therefor hes ordanit and ordanis the said obligationis to be insert &
registrat in the saidis buiks of Counsell Decerns the same to haif
the streth of a decreit and ordanis lettres to be Seild thirupoun in manner
specifiet therintill quherof the tenor followis Be It kend till all men be
thir present lettres We James Reid provest Johnne Andersoune and James Mochrie
baillies Johnne Walker deane of gild Padrick Turnbule thesaurar of ye
burgh of Dumfermeling David Stewart Johnne Andersoune zounger Litster
Andro Bennet William Broun burgesses and neighbours of ye said burgh presently
upoun the Counsell thereof for our selfis and takand the burding
upoun us for the haill remanit Counsell and Communitie of the said burgh
ffor samekill as the richt heigh richt Excellant and Michtie
princes Anna be the grace of god Quene of grait britan franse
and Irland Lady Dumfermeling and her hienes successors to the
Lordshipe of Dumfermeling Having the frie presentatioun and Nomi-
natioun of the maisters of ye Schoollis of the said burgh off Hir naturall love
and affectioun to vertue promotioun of Liberal sciences Educationing
the Youth and teaching of the maisters and Instructoris thereof off the readiest
of hir rent and patrimonie of the Lordshipe of Dumfermeling ffor the
speciall caus underwrittin hes instantlie causit Henrie Wardlaw of

Balmule hir hienes chalmerlane advance pey and delyver to us for our
 self and in name of the haill communitie of the said burgh all and haill
 the sowme of Tua thousand pundis usuell scottis monie to be imployit be us
 for performing of certine our necessar affairs tending to the weill profite
 and commodity of our burgh and haill Inhabitantis thereof ffor releif of divers
 debtis sowmis of monie and burdingis presentlie lying upoun our comoun guid
 And for the quhilk we and the haill Inhabitantis of our said burgh
 stand obleist and astrictit destinat affectit and mortifeit be hir most
 excellent majestie to remane with us and our posteritie in all tyme coming
 For payment to be maid be us and be of the annual rent after-mentionat
 To the Maisters and Instructoris of our Youth as is under expressit as ane
 common benefite to us all: Off the quhilk sowme of Tua Thousand pundis
 money abovementit we for ourselff and in name and behalff of ye said
 Communitie of ye said burgh our and their successoris hald us contentit presant-
 lie satisffeit and peyit and for us and haill communitie of ye said burgh
 our and their successoris provests bailies counsell and Communitie thereof exoners quyt
 clame and Discharge the said richt heich richt excellent and michtie princes
 hir airis and successoris hir said chalmerlane and all utheris quholm it effeirs
 thereof for now and ever Thairfoir we be band and obligit
 Lyk as be the tennor thireof we the saidis provest bailies dene of gild Thesaurer
 and Counsell for the said burgh for ourself and takand the burding
 upoun for the said communitie as representing the Haill Bodie of our
 said burgh bind and obleiss us and our successoris provest bailies counsell
 and Communitie of Dumfermeling To mak guid and thankfull payment
 of ye sowme of Tua hundred pundis money foiresaid yearly and termlic
 in all tyme coming: To witt to the present maister of the grammar schooll of Dum-
 fermeling and his successoris the sowme of ane hundred pundis money foirsaid
 And to the present maister of the Sang Scooull and his successoris the sowme of ane
 uther hundred pundis monie foirsaid To be peyit yearlie and termlic in
 all tyme coming at tua termis in the year witsunday and martimes in winter
 be equall portionis Beginnand the first termis payment thereof at the first
 terme of Martinmas next to cume and sua forth yearlie and termlic to Indure
 and be peyit to the present maisters of ye foirsaidis schoollis and their successoris maisters
 thereof for ever as ane perpetuall annuall and yearlie dutie foundit
 doittit and mortefeit be hir most excellent majestie for benefite and
 maintenance of ye foirsaid scoullis and upbringin of the Youth thereintill
 in all tyme coming Provyding alwais that it sall not be leissum
 to the provest baileis nor Communitie of the said burgh nor our successoris
 To admit or plaice nor to depois the present maisters of the saidis schuilis
 nor thaime that sal be admittit and placit thirafter without the special
 advise concurrence and consent of ye Queenis most excellent maistie
 and hir Highnes successoris our Superiairis or ellis of ye present heritable bailie
 of ye Lordshipe of Dumfermeling and his successoris heritabill baileis thirof
 Sua that the full richt of nominatioun and presentatioun of the saidis maisters present &
 becum sall remane with hir Majestie or foirsaid heritabill bailzie and thir
 successoris: And the provest baileis counsell and communitie of the

said burgh obleis us and our foirsaid successoris to gif hir hienes and the said Bailie and thir successoris our faithful advys anent the qualificationis lyfe conversatioun admissioun and depositioun of the saidis maisters in all tymis coming; sal be advys hir Hieness and the said bailies for them and thair successoris promissis to accept in sa far as the same makes for the weill of the said burgh vertuous and guide upbringing of the youth; and for the mair securitie we ar content and consentis that the presentis be actit and Registrat in the buiks of Counsell ad perpetuam remanentiam and to haif the strenth of ain Act and Decreet of ye Lordis therof and their autoritie to be interponit thereto with executionis

of horning upoun ane simple charge of ten dais to pass thereupon; and for registrating heiroyf Constitute Mr Thomas Rollok advocat conjunctly and severallie our procurators In by forma promitten de rata Eas In witnes whereof written by Wm Broun Notary in Dumfermeling we haif subscribit the same with our handis at Dumfermeling the xxviii therof august the year of god Im vi c and ten yeiris Before thir witnesses: John Bruce apperand of Baldrige Robert Mercer of Sailing Padrick Stewart of Beath baileis depute of the regality of Dumfermeling Mr James Aitoun Portioner of Over Grainge James Kinghorne clerk of the said regalitie Sic subscribitur James Reid provest Johnne Andersoune bailie James Mochrie bailie be David Brown clerk because he cannot subscribe Johnne Walker deane of gild Padrick Trumbule thesaurer David Stewart as ane of the Counsell Johnne Andersoune ane of ye Counsell William Broun ane of the Counsell Andro Bennet ane of the Counsell Johnne Bruce witnes Robert Mercer of Sawling witnes Padrick Stewart witnes Mr James Aitoun witnes [Padrick] Kinghorne notarius witnes.

Extractum de libro actorum per me Dominum Joannem Skeen de Curyhill, Militem, Clericum Rotulorum Regist. et Concilii S.D.N. [Sine Die Nomine]—Regist. sub meo Signo et subscriptione manualibus. (Sic subscribitur) Jo. Skeene.

NAS: RD1/176. HAY. 226-227.

Transcribed by W. T. Johnston.

How much better the above transcription is than Ebenezer Henderson's text! Henderson, Ebenezer (1809-1879). *Annals of Dunfermline and vicinity from the earliest authentic period to the present time A.D. 1069-1878. Interspersed with explanatory notes, memorabilia, ...* Glasgow, 1879, 267-270. NLS: A.118.a.; L.C. 1181.; BCL.B5958.

A legacy of Queen Anne. Bequeathed to support local schoolmaster. *Dunfermline Press*, 14.4.1951, 4e.

A legacy of Queen Anne. New light on old endowment. *Dunfermline Press*, 19.5.1951, 4e.

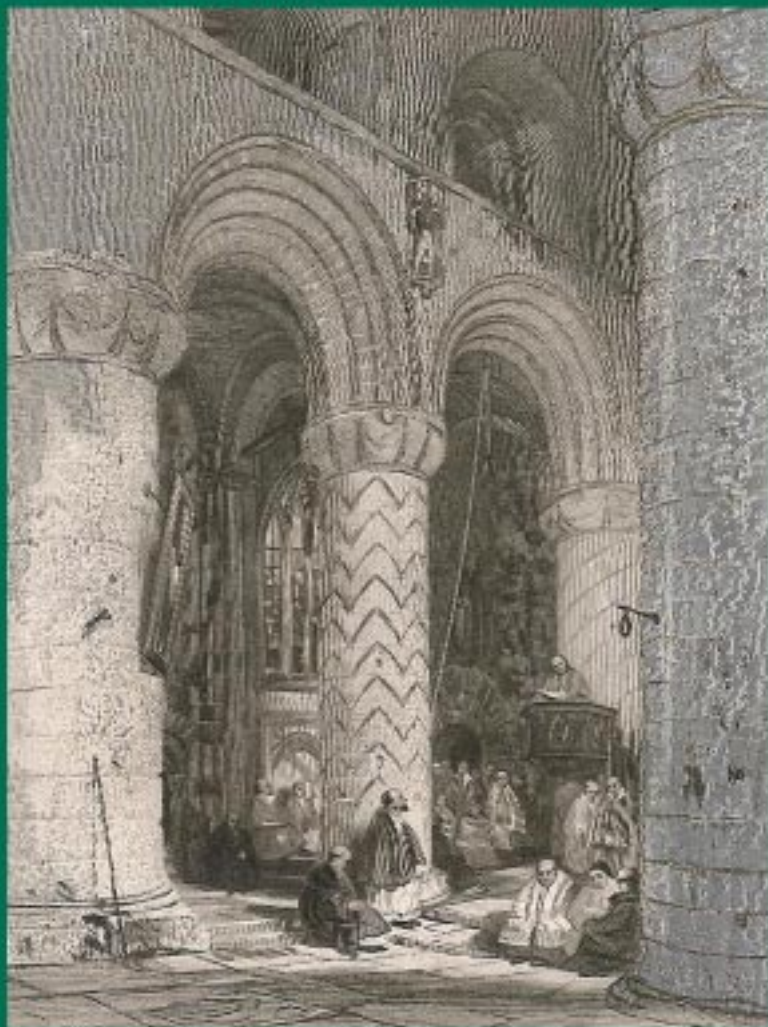
Song Schools Bibliography by W. T. Johnston

- Nicoll, James. *The twelve tunes, for the Church of Scotland, composed in four parts. (Viz.) Trible, contra, tenor and bassus. In a more plain and usefull method, than have been ever formerly published. The fourth edition, with the addition of the hand, scale of the gam, an easy method in naming the notes upon the rules and spaces conform to their several clefs, flat and sharp, with Bon-accord tune, carefully corrected, according as they are taught by the master of the Musick School of Aberdeen.* [8 line quotation.—Psalm CXLIX. I. and II. verses.] Aberdeen, printed by James Nicoll, printer to the city & university and are to be sold at his printing house above the Meal Mercat, at the sign of the town's arms, and shop in the end of the Broad-gate, An. Dom. 1714. NLS: H.29.e.40. 22 pp. 15.3 x 20.4 cm. With title printed in black and red, woodcut hand on page 7, woodcut arms of Aberdeen on page 22. I. Old common tune. II. English tune. III. London tune. IV. Stilt tune. V. Dundee tune. VI. Martyres tune. VII. Elgin tune. VIII. French tune. IX. Abbay tune. X. Dunfermling tune. XI. Kings tune. XII. Dukes tune. XIII. Aberdeens tune. Bon-Accord tune.
- Locke, William. *Doxologies, anthems, sanctuses, &c. as sung by the Abbey Church Choir, Dunfermline. Selected by W. Locke, Master of the Song.* Dunfermline:—printed by W. Clark. MDCCCLXIII. [1863]. 14 pp. 16.5 x 10.2 cm. Carnegie Library, Dunfermline: 4/LOC. [50 numbered subjects.]
- Valentine, James. 'On ancient music or Song Schools of Scotland, with a plea for the teaching of music in Scotland.' *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science*, 1863, 1864, 379-381.
- Henderson, Ebenezer. *The annals of Dunfermline and vicinity ...* Glasgow, 1879. Mortification of £2000 Scots by Queen Anne in favour of the Grammar and Music Schools of Dunfermline, 267- 270. NLS: A.118.a.; L.C. 1181.
- 'Register containing the state of every burgh within the kingdom of Scotland in the year 1692.' In: *Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society*, Edinburgh, 1881, 49-157. [Information about the salaries paid to the schoolmasters and about the sources whence the moneys to pay were derived is given for fifty-one burghs.]
- Maxwell, Alexander. *History of Dundee, narrated out of the Town Council Register.* Edinburgh and Dundee, 1884, The Music School, 336-340.
- Wright, Alexander. *The history of education and of the old parish schools of Scotland.* Edinburgh and Musselburgh, 1898. Sang Schools, 55-56.
- Master of Song School. *Dunfermline Press*, 10.10.1908, 4c.
- Master of the Song School. *Dunfermline Press*, 16.1.1909, 5a.
- Eyre-Todd, George. *History of Glasgow.* 2 volumes. Glasgow, 1931. The Song Schools and Grammar School, II, 100-110.
- Smart, Edward. *History of Perth Academy.* Perth, 1932. Music—The Sang School, 131-135. NLS: NE.6.c.10.
- Terry, Charles Sanford (1864-1936). 'John Forbes's "Songs and fancies."' *The Music Quarterly*, October 1936, XXII, no. 4, ... [Taught in the Musick-Schole of Aberdene by T.D., i.e. Thomas Davidson.]
- Johnson, Norman M. 'The Dunfermline Song School.' *Scottish Educational Journal*, 16.1.1942, XXV, 36.
- Webster, James Moir (1875-1957). *Dunfermline Abbey.* Dunfermline, 1948. NLS: R.245.e. Sang Scales, 183-188. Masters of the Sang Scule, 188-190.
- Webster, James Moir (1875-1957). 'The Song School in Dunfermline.' n.d. [c. 1953] Typescript. Quarto. 13pp.
- Mackintosh, M. *Education in Scotland. Yesterday and today.* Glasgow, 1962, 21-22.
- Craigie, James. *A bibliography of Scottish education before 1872.* London, 1970. Song, 105, 111, 114, 141, 161, 174.
- The Sang Schule of Sanct Nicholace Paroche.* Aberdeen, 1992. NLS: NE.6.c.10. Aberdeen University Library: L pAa N6 ASS s.
- Webster, James Moir (1875-1957). *The Sang School in Dunfermline.* n.p., n.d.

MANUSCRIPTS

- Terry, Charles Sanford (1864-1936). Collection of notes and extracts relating to song schools in Scotland and England. 242 pp. 26 cm. Aberdeen University Library: MS 699.
- Anne of Denmark, (1574-1619) Queen of James VI & I. Portrait attributed to Adriaen Vanson
Reproduced by permission of Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

DUNFERMLINE ABBEY NAVE



*Drawn by G. Catemole, Engraved by W. Simmons.
Published in 1834 by Charles Tilt Fleet Street London.*

PITCAIRN PUBLICATIONS

April 2010



ISBN 0 9521264 19

Pitcairn Publications, The Genealogy Clinic, 18 Chalmers Street, Dunfermline KY12 8DF

Tel: 01383 739344 Email: enquiries@pitcairnsresearch.com

Printed by Sprint Repro, Dunfermline