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# DUNFERMLINE SKETCHES & NOTES



ROBERT SOMERVILLE

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Dunfermline sketches & notes

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# DUNFERMLINE SKETCHES & NOTES

BY

ROBERT SOMERVILLE

B.Sc., F.R.S.E.



DUNFERMLINE

HERBERT T. MACPHERSON

MCMXVII

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## I.

### DUNFERMLINE

Authentic history of Dunfermline dates from the eleventh century. It was about 1064 that Malcolm III. (*Ceannmor*), King of Scotland, erected his tower on a steep, rocky mound, round which the Tower Burn flows in Pittencrieff Glen. Hence the name of the city derived from the Gaelic, *Dun-fiar-linne*, which means, literally, the fortified mound by the crooked stream. This same tower figures in the Burgh coat-of-arms with the appropriate motto, "*Esto Rupes Inaccessa.*" Here Malcolm married the Saxon Princess Margaret in 1070, and for centuries afterwards Dunfermline was the place of residence and of sepulture of the Scottish kings.

Industrially, Dunfermline is of more than local interest, for it is the principal seat of the table-linen industry in Britain. Recently it has acquired additional fame through being the birthplace of Mr Andrew Carnegie. It has still another claim to distinction, for the great naval establishment of Rosyth is included within its boundaries.

### III.

#### THE ABBEY FROM THE NORTH-WEST

The chief glory of Dunfermline is its Abbey, with whose history its own is inseparably bound. The Abbey has a splendid situation on ground sloping steeply on the west and south to Pittencrieff Glen. The old houses, below the Abbey, which give so much value to the picture, were unfortunately removed some years ago, but the buttressed ruin, traditionally known as St Catherine's Chapel, still remains, although completely screened by trees. The Abbey succeeded Iona as the place of royal sepulture, and many persons of royal blood have been interred within its walls.



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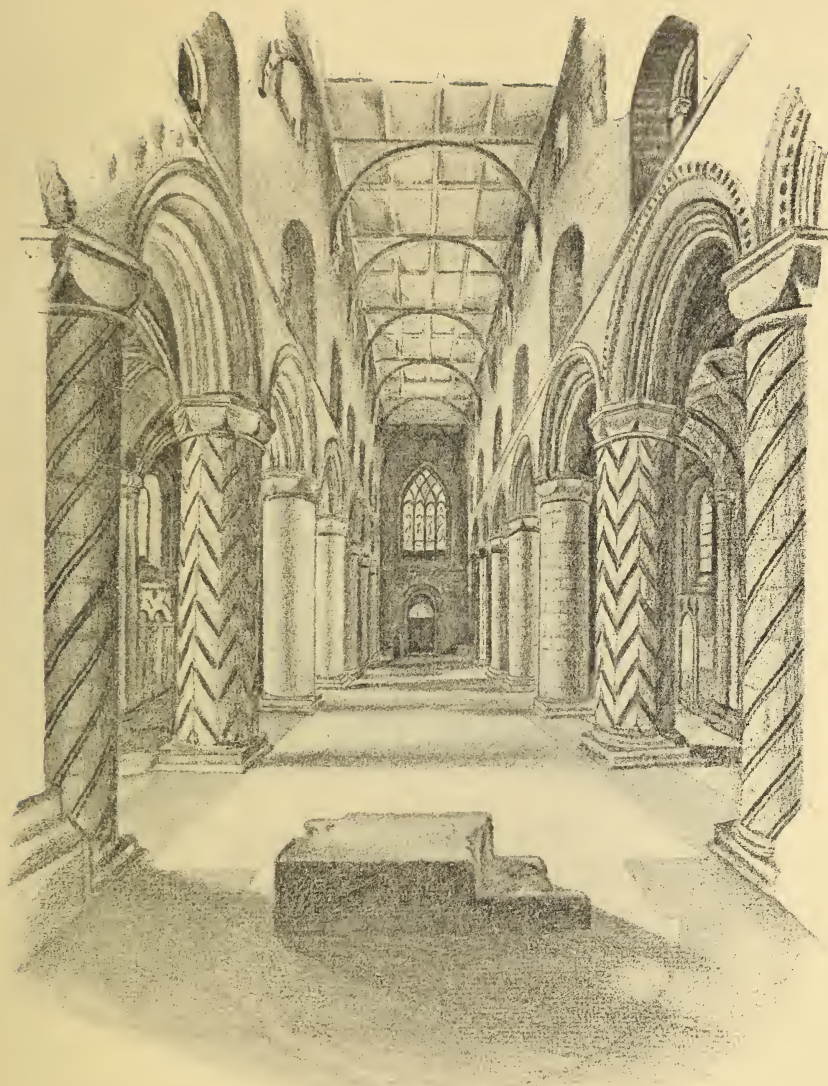
THE ABBEY

#### IV.

#### KING DAVID'S NAVE

This magnificent nave, the oldest existing portion of the Abbey Church, was erected by David I., in the twelfth century, on the site of an earlier church. A Culdee Church had existed here for two or three centuries. Malcolm and Margaret extended it by adding a tower to the west and a chancel and apse to the east. The outline of this Church of the Holy Trinity is now indicated by suitable paving on the floor of the present nave. The stonework in the foreground is part of the three lowest ashlar courses of the rood screen of the twelfth century church. The High Altar of the Church of the Holy Trinity stood on the line of this screen, and Malcolm and Margaret were buried beside it. The four decorated pillars at the east end of the nave were no doubt intended by King David to distinguish the hallowed spot containing the remains of his parents.





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KING DAVID'S HALL.

## V.

### THE ABBEY FROM THE SOUTH-EAST

The Abbey and Monastery of Dunfermline suffered greatly at the hands of Edward I. and the Reformers. In the course of time the choir, transepts, and aisles became total ruins. While these were being cleared away preparatory to the erection of the modern church in 1818, the body of King Robert the Bruce, who had been buried here in 1329, was discovered. The remains were re-interred with great ceremony in front of the pulpit of the new church. On this south side of the old Abbey may be seen the Wardlaw vault, and a beautiful Norman doorway which had been built up for many years. Within the ruins of the Lady Chapel at the east end of the church are the remains of St Margaret's Shrine, consisting of two massive base courses of lovely coralline limestone.



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THE ABBEY  
from SOUTH EAST

## VI.

### THE MONASTERY

Dunfermline Monastery was first founded as a Priory by Alexander I., and in 1124 it was erected into a Benedictine Monastery by David I., the "Sair Sanct for the Croun," who placed in it an abbot and twelve monks from Canterbury. By the close of the thirteenth century it had become the most magnificent conventual establishment in Scotland. The monastic buildings were on a lower level than the church and to the south of the nave. The imposing ruins, shown in the drawing, form the south wall of the Refectory, and probably date from the fourteenth century. A part projecting between the buttresses in the eastmost bay, and supported by an ornamental arch, had a reading desk from which one of the monks read aloud at meals. The Pends, arching the street, connected the Monastery on the right with the King's Kitchen and Palace shown on the left.



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THE MONASTERY

## VII.

### THE FRATERY

The Frater Hall or Refectory of the monks lies to the south of the church. Its south and west walls still remain. The ground between these and the Abbey has been levelled up so that the outer portions of the monastic buildings serve as retaining walls. The cloister court and the dormitories lay to the right, between the church and the Fraternity. In the west gable is the magnificent Frater Window of seven lights, sometimes referred to as the Crown Window, from the fact that its tracery, which is well preserved, forms something resembling a crown towards the top. The window dates from the fifteenth century. The doorway at the left connects with the Pend Tower. The tower at the right contained a stair giving access to the roof of the Pend Tower above and to the offices below. The recess, or *pulpitum*, in the eastmost bay of the south wall, merits attention at this level.



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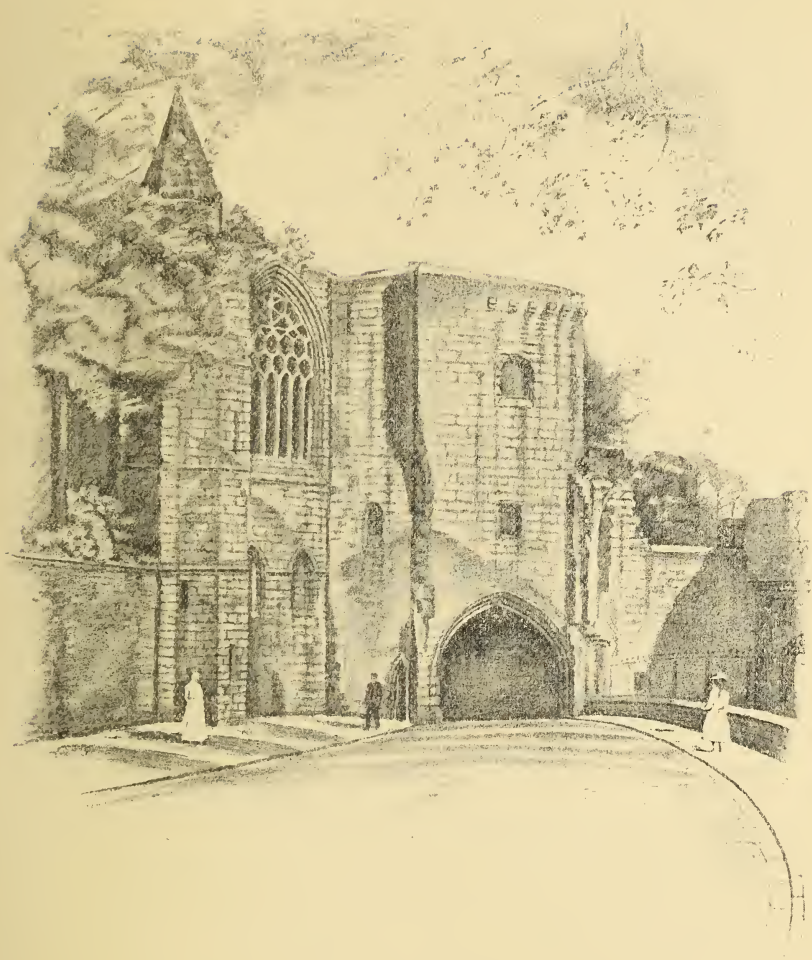
THE FRATERY

## VIII.

### THE PENDS

To the south-west of the Fraternity is the massive Pend Tower, which has an elegant groined archway or pend through which St Catherine's Wynd runs. The tower is almost complete, wanting only the cape house and roof. It served as a connection between the Monastery and the Palace. The street in front of the Pends was at one time known as the Palace Yard and the Huntsman's Yard, as the hunt used to meet here in earlier times.





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THE PENS.

## IX.

### THE PALACE RUINS

The Palace Ruins occupy a romantic situation below the Abbey overlooking Pittencrieff Glen. These massive buttressed walls have a history which is calculated to rouse the imagination and touch the emotions. The ruins are of various dates, the lower east end being the oldest part. The greater part of the Palace, as we now see it, was due to James V., who restored and extended it in 1540. When the Court departed to England the Palace was neglected, and gradually fell to ruin. Here were born David II. (1323), James I. (1394), Charles I. (1600) and his sister Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia (1596), by descent from whom our King now sits on his throne. The last king to reside here was Charles II., who signed the "Dunfermline Declaration" within its walls in 1650.



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PALACE RUINS

X.

BIRTHPLACE OF MR ANDREW CARNEGIE

The birthplace of Mr Andrew Carnegie, the munificent benefactor of his native city, stands at the corner of Priory Lane and Moodie Street. Mr Carnegie was born on the 25th November 1835 in the upper room which is now maintained, as far as possible, in its original state. At that time houses stood on both sides of the cottage and the Gas Works were behind, but these have been cleared away and the ground thrown into an open space.



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BIRTHPLACE OF  
MR. ANDREW CARNEGIE.

## XI.

### PITTENCRIEFF HOUSE

Undoubtedly the greatest of Mr Carnegie's benefactions to his native city was his gift, in 1903, of the romantic, historic, and picturesque Pittencrieff Glen, and the noble Pittencrieff Park, together with a sum now amounting to three-quarters of a million pounds, the income from which was to be devoted "to give, especially to the young, some charm, some happiness, some elevating conditions of life which residence elsewhere would have denied them."

The Glen has seasonal and perennial charms, but the ideal time to visit it is in the perfect days of June. Then, to quote from the *Prologue to the Lyoun and the Mous* by Robert Henryson, the Scottish Chaucer, who frequented these same paths,

"Sweit wes the smell of flouris quhyte and reid,  
The noyis of birdis richt delitious,  
The bewis braid bloomit abone my heid,  
The ground growand with gersis gracious:  
Of all plesance that place wes plenteous,  
With sweit odouris, and birdis harmonie."

In addition to its natural and historic attractions, the Glen has lovely gardens, conservatories, aviaries, and museums, to interest the visitor, and a professional band discourses excellent music twice daily in the summer months.



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PITTENCRIEFF HOUSE

## XII.

### OLD MEAL MILL

This picturesque ruin stood to the south of the Monastery and adjacent to the Palace Ruins, but was removed some years ago in the widening of Monastery Street. It was the topmost of three mills, all turned by the same water as it dropped from wheel to wheel. The lowest of these was the Snuff Mill, whose ruins still remain to enhance the interest of the scene.





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OLD MEAL MILL  
MONASTERY STREET.

### XIII.

#### ST CATHERINE'S WYND

St Catherine's Wynd runs from the Pends to the Kirkgate, with the Abbey on the right and Pittencrieff Glen on the left. The upper part, adjoining the Kirkgate, had a number of houses which were quaint and picturesque, and were not without historical interest. The houses, as seen from the west, appear in the drawing of the Abbey from the north-west. The south-most of the houses was the Baillery or house of the Constable of the Royal Buildings. Queen Anne's House stood across the street here, at the point from which this sketch was made, but it was removed in 1797. The old stone arch, below the crow-stepped gable, was the porch of St Catherine's Chapel and Almhouse, the ruins of which may now be seen from the street.



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SAINTE CATHERINE'S WYND.

#### XIV.

#### THE KIRKGATE

The north-west corner of the Abbey was in need of repair after the Reformation, and was restored to its present state at the end of the sixteenth century by William Schaw, the king's architect, who erected the steeple, porch, and enormous buttresses seen on the north and south sides of the old Abbey Church. The porch is evidently of an earlier date, and is much admired, but it hides a beautiful Norman doorway and disfigures the elegant arcading above. On the right of the walk leading to the porch is the tombstone of the Rev. David Ferguson, the first Protestant minister of Dunfermline, and the writer of the Scottish Proverbs. The Corporation Buildings are on the right in the immediate foreground, and opposite is the Maygate, at the corner of which Robert Gilfillan, the author of "Oh, why left I my Hame?" for some time kept a grocer's shop.



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THE KIRKGATE.

## THE ABBOT'S HOUSE

The best known of the old houses of Dunfermline is the Abbot's House, which stands between the Maygate and the Abbey Churchyard, and is an excellent example of sixteenth century architecture. It belonged to the Abbey, and was held from 1560-1584 by Abbot Pitcairn, Secretary of State to Queen Mary. It has the oft-quoted sage couplet inscribed in quaint spelling above its doorway:—

SEN · VORD · IS · THRALL · AND · THOCHT · IS · FRE  
KEIP · VEILL · THY · TONGE · I · COINSELL · THE :

Other objects figuring in the sketch are Clerk Black's Tower, the graceful spire of the Guildhall, and the old Music Hall.

The graveyard in the foreground is the oldest part of the Abbey Cemetery. A small grassy mound at the extreme left, with "Wallace's Thorn," is the traditional burying place of the Scottish hero's mother. Adjacent to it may be seen a Celtic cross erected in memory of their father by two celebrated natives—Sir Noel and Waller Paton,—while to the right is the tomb of Ralph Erskine, the distinguished dissenting divine.



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THE ABBOT'S HOUSE.

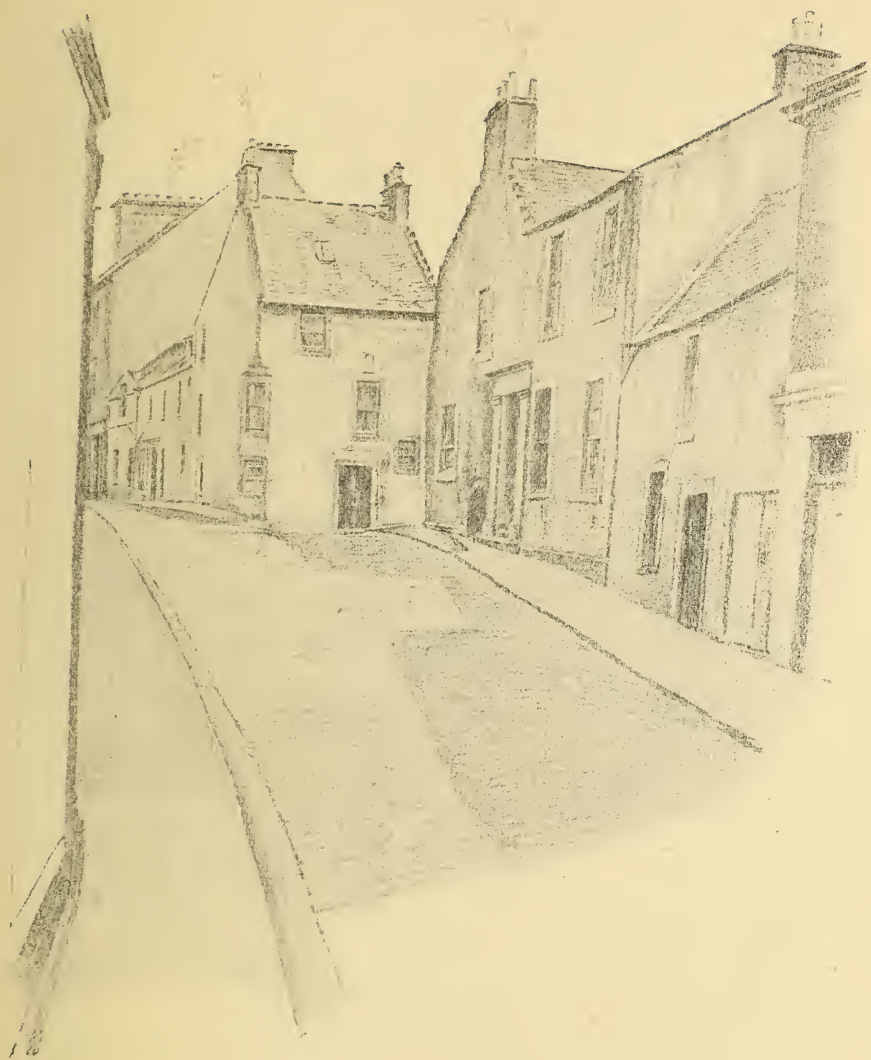
## XVI.

### HEAD OF THE CROSS WYND

The houses depicted are among the older houses of interest still remaining in Dunfermline. The nearer one, with the crow-stepped gable, dates from 1626, two years after the great fire of Dunfermline. It bears on its west front, facing the Cross Wynd, an interesting "Fire-stone." The house looking down the street has a tablet with the date 1727, and occupies the site of an earlier house in which Lady Wardlaw, the authoress of the celebrated ballad *Hardyknute*, and, according to some authorities, of the still more famous *Sir Patrick Spens*, resided. Immediately beyond is another house in which Robert Pollok, the author of *The Course of Time*, corrected the proofs of that poem.

Dunfermline is famous in ecclesiastical history as "the Cradle of Dissent." Within a short distance of this spot are Queen Anne Street Church and Gillespie Church, the first of Secession and Relief Churches respectively.





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HEAD of CROSS WYND

## XVII.

### THE HIGH STREET

The streets in the older parts of Dunfermline are generally narrow and irregular, but they contain many substantial buildings. The one on the left, when erected in 1807, was intended for the County Buildings of Fife. It was hoped at the time that Dunfermline would become the county town of Fife! However, the building was first used as the Guild or Merchant Hall, and in 1817 was converted into the Spire Inn, so called because it is surmounted by the spire shown in the drawing of the Abbot's House. Since 1849 it has been used as the County Buildings for West Fife.

The pillar of the Market Cross was placed in its present position in 1868, although it had been removed from the middle of the High Street here as far back as 1752.

The Clock Tower, looking up the street, is that of the Municipal Buildings, erected in 1875. Beyond is Bridge Street, leading into Pittencrieff Glen.



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HIGH STREET

## XVIII.

### THE NEW ROW

Dunfermline lies on a steep slope facing the south, and thus excellent views of the surrounding landscape are to be had from its streets. At certain points glimpses may be seen of the River Forth studded with warships, and also of the spires and hills about Edinburgh. One of the best of these views is obtained looking down the New Row, a steep street at the east end of the High Street leading to Queensferry. Behind the trees in the middle distance is the Garden City of Rosyth. Beyond it may be seen the giant cantilevers of the Forth Bridge, while the dark undulating outline and wooded slopes of the Pentland Hills fill in the background.



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NEW ROW

## XIX.

### HIGH SCHOOL AND LAUDER TECHNICAL SCHOOL

These buildings have an excellent situation facing Priory Lane. The High School has a history dating from the sixteenth century. The present School, with the bell tower, was erected by public subscription in 1886. The nearer of the two buildings was opened in 1899 by Mr Carnegie, who provided the funds for its erection, and named it after his uncle, Mr George Lauder. Within the same grounds are other three buildings devoted to educational purposes—a large Gymnasium, a Primary Department, and an Engineering and Weaving School.



R. SOMERVILLE

HIGH SCHOOL &  
LAUDER TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

## XX.

### MOODIE STREET

As viewed from the south, Dunfermline has a picturesque aspect, set among trees with a background of shapely hills. On a nearer approach, the Abbey Towers become more prominent, and lend a dignity and a charm to the city. To the native returning after a long absence the sight of the Abbey Towers and the sound of the Abbey Bells bring back the memory of long ago.





R. SOMERVILLE

MOODIE STREET

## XXI.

### ROSYTH CASTLE

Rosyth Castle now lies within the boundaries of Dunfermline, and thus finds an appropriate place in these sketches. With Rosyth, one looks back on the past and forward to the future. It has associations with the two most famous of Scottish queens. On the shores of this bay Queen Margaret landed in 1066 and was received by Malcolm Canmore, and here the hapless Queen Mary rested on her flight from Loch Leven to Langside. As sketched about twenty years ago, it reminds one of a quiet spot where no louder sound was heard than the eerie cry of the curlew or the sigh of summer breezes on the sea. But now, where once these placid waters rolled, the great dockyard with its bustle and activity obtrudes itself, and one asks "*Cui bono?*" and exclaims "*O tempora! O mores!*"



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ROSYTH CASTLE









