



FALKIRK

FALKIRK was erected into a Burgh of Barony by King James VI. in 1600, and into a Burgh of Regality by King Charles I. in 1646. It was made a Parliamentary Burgh in 1833, and up till very recently had as its Common Seal a shield bearing a Highland warrior, taken from the Coat of Arms of the Burgh. But the Town Council, considering that that Coat of Arms had no association with anything relating to the town, adopted a new Coat of Arms. It is as follows:—

A lion sejant, guardant, holding in its fore paws a shield. The lion is taken from the lion which appears on the top of the Cross Well. The shield is adapted from the Coat of Arms of the family of Callendar, who had for long a connection with the Burgh. It is "Sable, a bend between six billets, or, for Callendar." Nisbet says: "This surname is from the lands and castle of Callendar, anciently called Calloner (as some tell us, especially the Dane Van-Bassan in his Armories), from a Roman who founded that castle of Callendar, and called it, after his own name, Calloner, from *calo*, a faggot or log of wood, whose office it was to provide fuel for the Roman camp; and when Arms came in use these of that name took such figures. Others, again, say with some more certainty that these billets in the Arms of Callendar represent sheets or scrolls of paper, upon the account that several of the heads of the family of Callendar of that Ilk were comptrollers or clerks to our kings of old."

The bend is embattled on each side to represent the Roman Wall of Antoninus. In the centre is a representation of the Church of Falkirk. Several derivations of the name are given, but the most probable is from *vallum*, a wall or rampart, and *kirk*, which alludes to the vicinity of the town to the Wall of Antoninus.

Above the church are a shield and two cross swords, symbolising the first battle of Falkirk in 1298, and beneath are a targe and two cross claymores, symbolising the second battle of Falkirk in 1746.

The mottoes seem to have originated thus. The natives of Falkirk call themselves the "bairns" of Falkirk, and these and other proverbs seem to indicate a propensity for pugnacity, and would show that they are always ready to unite for defence, and that if one is interfered with the rest will at once rally round him, and have to be reckoned with also.



FALKLAND

FALKLAND seems to have been a celebrated place in ancient times, as Sibbald, quoting from the "Book of the Priory of St. Andrews," says that "in the fifth year of the reign of King David I., Constantine, Earl of Fife, and Macbeth, *Thane of Falkland*, gathered together an army to prevent Robert de Burgoner from forcing the Culdees of St. Andrews and Lochleven to give him the half of the lands of Kirkness, in which they succeeded." In a charter of King Malcolm IV. the name is spelt *Falecken*, which has been derived from the Gaelic *Fal-aighe-leana*, meaning the King's Hindmeadow; but the most probable derivation of the name is said to be from the Gothic *Falk*, which means a kind of hawk, and refers to the amusement of hawking, which of yore was a favourite pursuit of the Scottish kings in the forests in this neighbourhood.

King James II. erected Falkland into a Royal Burgh in 1458. Either King James III. or King James IV. built the palace near the site of the old castle of Falkland, which at one time belonged to the Earls of Fife, but of which, however, no vestige now remains. The palace became a favourite residence of the Scottish kings when they enjoyed the pleasures of the chase in the adjoining forest and on the Lomonds. The preamble to King James II.'s charter of erection gives as the reasons for granting it, the frequent residence of the Royal Family at the Manor of Falkland, and the damage and inconvenience sustained by the Court and others who came there for want of innkeepers and victuallers.

The Seal of the Burgh, a stag reposing at the foot of an oak tree, alludes to the famous forest, which was destroyed by Cromwell in 1652, and who used the trees to construct a fort at Dundee. Lamont says: "This yeare the English beganne to cutt downe Fackland wood; the most part of the tries were oakes."

The motto of the Burgh is taken from the line in the sixth book of *Vigil's "Aeneid,"* 620, *Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere Divos* (Warned [by example] learn righteousness and not to contemn the gods).



FORFAR

FORFAR is a town of undoubted antiquity, but how old is not known. It was, however, chosen as one of the seats of the Pictish kings, and the succeeding kings of Scotland continued residing in the place. It seems to have been erected into a Royal Burgh by King David I., and King Charles II. in 1665 granted it a Charter of Confirmation.

The Seal of the Burgh is as follows: In the centre a shield, in the lower half of which is a three-towered embattled castle. In the upper half there is in the centre a tree, on the right side a bull's head, and on the left side a stag's head. Above the shield is a helmet with mantling, and above that, for crest, the Scottish Lion rampant. Below the shield is a scroll with the motto, "*Ut quocunque paratus*" (Prepared to go anywhere). The shield is supported on the right side by an archer holding his bow, and on the left by a warrior holding on his left arm a shield bearing a Scotch thistle.

Forfar seems to have arisen under the shadow of an ancient castle which was situated on an island at the east end of the Loch of Forfar. The loch was originally much larger than it is now. The builder of the castle is unknown, and now no vestiges of it remain, but the castle on the Seal still perpetuates its memory. It is said that Malcolm Canmore held a parliament in Forfar Castle in 1057, and during it, titles and surnames were first conferred upon the Scottish nobility. Tytler tells us that King Robert the Bruce, after the capture of Aberdeen in 1308, "held his victorious progress into Angus; and here new success awaited him, in the capture of the castle of Forfar, at this time strongly garrisoned by the English. It was taken by escalade during the night by a soldier named Philip, the forester of Platane, who put all the English to the sword; and the king, according to his usual policy, instantly commanded the fortifications to be destroyed." A representation of the castle is carved on the old Market Cross, and from it the figure on the Seal is taken. Forfar Castle seems to have been a residence of the early Scottish monarchs when they engaged in hunting in the extensive forests which at that time covered the surrounding country. Consequently from the forests we have the tree on the Seal, and the bull's and stag's heads as representing the animals of the chase. The archer and the soldier may represent the bodyguard of the king.



FORRES

FORRES was erected into a Royal Burgh by King William the Lion, but, the older charters having been destroyed, it now enjoys its municipal privileges under a Charter of Novodamus from King James IV., dated 1496.

The Parish Church being dedicated to St. Lawrence, the Seal of the Burgh bears a representation of this saint with a nimbus round his head. He holds a Bible in his right hand, and his left hand rests upon the gridiron, the instrument of his martyrdom. At his right side is the crescent moon, and at his left a star, probably intended for the sun. Beneath these, on either side, is a branch of foliage.

St. Lawrence, Archdeacon and martyr, is venerated by the Roman Catholics only next to St. Peter and St. Paul. He was a Spaniard, and was very young when he went to Rome, but Pope Sixtus II. chose him for his Archdeacon on account of his blameless life. Sixtus was accused of being a Christian, and suffered death, but before this he prophesied to Lawrence that in three days he would follow him, and that his torments would be longer and more severe. Accordingly, on the 10th of August 258 A.D., Lawrence was burnt on the Pincian Hill. As he apparently had been peculiarly obnoxious, the order for his punishment was: "Bring out the grate of iron; and when it is red hot, on with him, roast him, broil him, turn him: upon pain of our high displeasure, do every man his office, O ye tormentors." In the midst of his torments, to further triumph over his persecutor, Lawrence said to him: "This side is now roasted enough; O tyrant, do you think roasted meat or raw the best."

With reference to the gridiron, Mr Robinson, in his "Ecclesiastical Researches," says: "Philip II. of Spain, having won a battle on the 10th of August, the festival of St. Lawrence, vowed to consecrate a palace, a church, and a monastery to his honour. He did erect the Escorial, which is the largest palace in Europe. This immense quarry consists of several courts and quadrangles, all disposed in the shape of a gridiron. The bars form several courts, and the Royal Family occupy the handle. 'Gridirons,' says one who examined it, 'are met with in every part of the

building. There are sculptured gridirons, iron gridirons, painted gridirons, marble gridirons, etc., etc. There are gridirons over the doors, gridirons in the yards, gridirons in the windows, gridirons in the galleries. Never was an instrument of martyrdom so multiplied, so honoured, so celebrated: and thus much for gridirons.'"

There are numerous paintings of St. Lawrence, and in many of them he is represented as looking up to heaven, from whence an angel comes bearing the crown and palms of victory. Probably the branches of foliage on the Seal are meant for these palms of victory.

The derivation of the name as applied to both the town and parish is very uncertain, but it is conjectured to refer to their situation near the sea.



FORTROSE

THE Burgh of Fortrose is composed of the two towns of Rosemarkie and Chanonry, which were erected, by a charter of King James II. in 1444, into a Royal Burgh under the name of Fortross, meaning the fort of the peninsula, now Fortrose. King James VI. ratified the above charter in 1592, and confirmed it more fully in 1612. At that time Fortrose is spoken of as "a town flourishing in the arts and sciences, having been at that time the seat of divinity, law, and physic in this corner of the kingdom." Rosemarkie itself is of great antiquity, having been erected into a Royal Burgh by King Alexander II. The "Old Statistical Account" says that the name was originally spelt Rossmarkie or Rosemarknie, and it adds that the name probably originated from the fact that in ancient times the parish church, which was built on high ground, had a steeple, and as this steeple would naturally be the first object seen by mariners when sailing up the Moray Firth, they would become accustomed to say to each other, "Mark ye Ross" (meaning "observe the point"), which saying in the course of time became changed into Rossmarkie. Chanonry is so called because it was the canonry of Ross, where the Bishops of Ross resided, though the Bishop was originally styled *Episcopus Rosmarkiensis*. The ruins of the cathedral which stood in the town of Chanonry, and which was destroyed by Cromwell, remain to bear witness to the erstwhile importance of the town.

It is said that St. Boniface founded the cathedral, and on the Seal of the united Burgh the saint appears dressed as a bishop, with his right hand raised in blessing, holding a crozier in his left. At his right is St. Peter, holding the keys of heaven and hell. The Seal is circumscribed, in Saxon characters, "*S capituli s cou Petri & Bonifacii de Rosmarkin*," and is the old diocesan Seal. The *s cou* seems to be a contraction for *sanctorum*.

St. Boniface is said to have died here, and to have been buried in the church dedicated to St. Peter. Dr Skene, in his "Celtic Scotland," remarks that in the

reign of Nectan, son of Derili, "it is reported that a missionary named Bonifacius, who came from Rome, landed in the Firth of Forth, and made his way through Pictavia till he came to a place called Restinoth. Here he met Nectan, King of the Picts, with his army, who, with his nobles and servants, received from Bonifacius the sacrament of baptism. The king gave the place of his baptism, which he dedicated to the Holy Trinity, to Bonifacius. Many people were indoctrinated there into the Christian faith, and he employed himself in the erection of churches there and in other places. The legend tells us that Bonifacius was an Israelite descended from the sister of St. Peter and St. Andrew, and a native of Bethlehem." Dr Skene goes on to add that the above is mere legend, and simply means that Bonifacius, who is termed in the calendars "Kiritinus," brought over the king of the Picts and his people from the Columban Church into conformity with the Church of Rome. He further adds that the above assembly seems to have been held at Scone, then the chief seat of the Pictish kingdom.



FORT-WILLIAM

AT one time Fort-William bore the name of Maryburgh, it having been erected, as Burt tells us, "into a barony in favour of the governor of the fort for the time being, and into a borough bearing the name of Queen Mary." This was in the reign of William and Mary, hence also the name of Fort-William. In 1875 the Lindsay Act was adopted, and, under the Burgh Police Act of 1892, the following device was taken for the Common Seal: Two Lochaber axes crossed, with a crown in the upper angle, and on each side an oak branch with acorns. Beneath is the Gaelic motto, "*A dh'aindeoin co theireadh e,*" meaning "Gainsay it who dare."

The Lochaber axes have reference to the town being the capital of the Lochaber district. Sir Walter Scott tells us that the ancient Highlanders used the hook at the back of the axe to assist them to climb over walls. This was done by fixing the hook on the wall and pulling themselves up by the handle, and he adds that the axe was introduced from Scandinavia. The crown refers to the two Royal names the Burgh has borne, while the oak branches are the badge of the Clan Cameron, which possessed the country at one time.

We are told that it was one Samuel Cameron, belonging to this neighbourhood, who, with a Lochaber axe, killed the pious and brave Colonel Gardiner at the battle of Prestonpans, but afterwards he always alleged that he did so in self defence, as the Colonel had attacked him first.



FRASERBURGH

FRASERBURGH was at one time a little seaport called Faithlie, but Alexander Fraser, the seventh Laird of Philorth having constructed "a convenient harbour" here, he by Royal Charter in 1546, obtained its erection into a free Burgh of Barony. His successor, Alexander Fraser, the eighth Laird of Philorth, was knighted by King James VI., and he obtained another charter dated 9th April 1588, erecting Faithlie into a free port and Burgh of Barony. On 1st July 1592 another charter was obtained creating Faithlie a Burgh of Regality and a free port "and ordaining that the same shall in all time coming be called the burgh and port de Fraser," now Fraserburgh. Under this charter powers were granted to build a college, or colleges, and to found a University, which were immediately exercised, and an Act of 1597 recites that Sir Alexander Fraser having begun to erect college buildings, ought to be helped, and gives a grant of the teinds, etc. The college, however, came to an untimely end in 1605, but previous to this, when the black plague raged in Aberdeen, the classes of King's College were held in it for one session. On 4th April 1601, King James VI., by a third charter from him, ratified and confirmed to Sir Alexander Fraser and his heirs all the grants mentioned in the two preceding charters of 1588 and 1592, under which, in 1613, Sir Alexander entered into a contract with the feuars of Fraserburgh, and appointed a Baron Bailie and Town Council.

Aberdeen, having previously objected to Faithlie being made a free port, vehemently opposed the erection of Fraserburgh into a Burgh of Regality and free port. In 1605 the Town Council of Aberdeen raised an action in the Court of Session to declare that the privileges of trade, etc., granted to Aberdeen included the whole sheriffdom or county, and that in consequence the erection of Fraserburgh into a Burgh of Regality and free port was illegal. These proceedings dragged on till 1616 but were at last abandoned, and Fraserburgh was left to enjoy its privileges in peace.

The late Lord Saltoun in "The Frasers of Philorth," says that "Crawford has placed on record a Latin epigram by Mr David Rattray, then minister of Philorth,

who thus, according to the fashion of the age, celebrated the institution of the burgh:—

“Hoc tibi Fraseria populis Rex curia nomen,
Hoc dedit a proavis nobile nomen eques;
Vive diu felix, vero pietatis amore:
Vive memor tanti nominis usque tui.”

“Which may be rendered into English in the following words:—

“The King, O Fraserburgh! has given to thee
A name through ages known to knightly fame.
Long flourish thou! upheld by piety,
And aye be mindful of thine honoured name.”

Fraserburgh adopted the Lindsay Act in 1872, and under the Burgh Police Act of 1892 the following device was taken for the Common Seal.

The centre contains a shield divided into four, the three cinquefoils in the first and fourth quarters being the Coat of Arms of the family of Fraser, and the first quarter of the Coat of Arms of Lord Saltoun. Originally the Coat of Arms bore six cinquefoils, but in the fourteenth century the number was reduced to three, the reason for the change not being known. The second quarter is a lion rampant bruised by a bend for Abernethy, being the second quarter of the Coat of Arms of Lord Saltoun. The origin of the family of the Abernethies is shrouded in the obscurity of early Scottish history, but, in the twelfth century the representatives of the family were Abbots of the Culdee Monastery of Abernethy in Strathearn, from which they took their surname. Wyntoun says that they were members of the family of which Macduff the Thane of Fife was the head, and as the Macduff Arms were *Or*, a lion rampant *gules*, the Abernethies adopted the same, with, as a difference, the addition of a bend dexter *sable*. The third quarter is a lion rampant, which is taken from the third quarter of the Coat of Arms of Lord Saltoun, which contains three lions rampant. These lions are for Ross, the estate of Philorth having come into the Fraser family by a charter from the Earl of Ross, dated 4th June 1375, to Alexander Fraser and his wife, Johanna, who was the co-heiress to the Earldom of Ross, the estate being granted to her in satisfaction of her claims on the Earldom. The shield is supported by two angels, being the supporters of Lord Saltoun's Coat of Arms, while above, as crest, is an ostrich holding a key in its bill, which is a variation of Lord Saltoun's crest, an ostrich holding a horse-shoe, which crest is said to have been adopted by the above Alexander Fraser, the first of Philorth, and is conjectured to have been taken from the supporters of the Arms of the family of Comyn, Earls of Buchan, who at one time held the estate of Philorth. Here, the key is intended to symbolise the keys of the town gates, but as Fraserburgh was never a walled town, it is difficult to see where the symbolism comes in. Beneath, is the motto of Lord Saltoun, “*In God is all.*”

Nisbet tells us that cinquefoils are ordinarily called *frases* or *frasiers*, *i.e.*, straw-berry flowers, hence the name of Fraser. The first of the race is said to have been one Pierre, who, in 807, in the reign of King Achaius, came to Scotland as ambassador from Charlemagne. He married Euphemia, only daughter of Raham, the great favourite of King Achaius. Their children settled in Tweeddale, and later on their

successors obtained great possessions in the north of Scotland, which were enjoyed by the head of the family under the title of Lord Fraser.

The name Fraser is said to have originated in the presentation of a plate of remarkably fine strawberries to Charles the Simple, by one who had previously borne the name of De Berri, and whose name was changed by that King to De Fraise.

The Frasers of Philorth obtained the title of Saltoun by intermarriage in 1595 with a daughter of the Abernethies, the ancient barons, Margaret, the daughter of the seventh Baron Saltoun, having married Alexander Fraser of Philorth. Alexander Abernethy, the ninth Baron Saltoun, died without issue in 1668, and was succeeded by his cousin, Alexander Fraser, born in 1604, son of the above Margaret, and he thus became the tenth Baron Saltoun. His title was confirmed to him by King Charles II., and ratified by Parliament in 1670.

Thomas the Rhymer is said to have used his occult powers on behalf of this family, and to have prophesied that—

“Quhen there’s ne’er a Cock o’ the North,
You’ll find a Firzell in Philorth.”

The Duke of Gordon used to be the Cock of the North, and the prophecy is said to have been fulfilled by that title having lain dormant for many years. The rhyme which is now preserved in the family is—

“When a cock craws in the North,
There’ll be a Fraser at Philorth.”