

REFECTORY AND ROYAL PALACE

Suggestions for restoration of
The Royal Palace and Refectory
For Carnegie Dunfermline Trust.

By R. R. Anderson of Edinburgh 1906.

RUINS OF ROYAL PALACE AND REFECTORY.



By Paul Sandy R.A. 1780.

Compiled by S. Pitcairn.

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DUNFERMLINE

By

R. ROWAND ANDERSON OF EDINBURGH 1906



Pitcairn Publications. The Genealogy Clinic, 18 Chalmers Street, Dunfermline KY12 8DF
Tel: 01383 739344 Email enquiries @pitcairnresearch.com

Fraternity walls south side.



Palace Walls south side.



Wood engraving by W. Ballingall after sketch by WHP 1871

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By

R. Rowand Anderson.

Notes on the history of Abbey and Royal Palace, with suggestions for a restoration of the Refectory etc., of the Abbey and what remains of the Place.

The historical monuments of a country are the most convincing object lessons of its history. The ruins of an ancient palace or of a monastic establishment conjure up to the student or to the imaginative man (or woman) a whole past era, and awaken curiosity even in the plain and unlearned. An ancient building is a book that he who runs may read. There it is an incontrovertible fact, proclaiming its purpose more or less manifestly according as it has been well or ill preserved, and revealing to us what manner of men they were who built it, in a way more graphic and convincing than any written record.

Dunfermline has inherited an unusually valuable legacy of historical buildings from the past. It is one of the few places whose traditions and monuments take us back to a period anterior to the War of Independence; it is linked through Malcolm Canmore whom one may call its founder, to the old Kings who sleep in Iona, and it is handed on through the glorious Robert Bruce, to the veneration of Scotsmen in all time to come.

The history of Dunfermline is distinguished from that of most Scottish Royal residences in that it is not a chronicle of attack and siege, of capture and recapture, of stratagems and treasons, but rather the uneventful record of peaceful home life, the greatest events in which were the common ones of birth, marriage and death. It is interwoven with the fabric of the great religious house, founded and fostered by the piety of a line of kings, and of the royal residence, which stood side by side with it, and there is not another place in Scotland those historical memories bring before us with equal distinctness the personages concerned in them. What Holyrood Linlithgow and Falkland do in preserving the memory of our later Stuart Kings, Dunfermline alone does for the earlier race who preceded them, and had we nothing but the lines from the ballad of Sir Patrick Spens,

“The King sits in Dunfermline toun
Drinking the blude-red wine.”

our imaginations could not fail to be stirred by the mere mention of its name.

No one who has ever heard it could forget the romantic story of the origin of Dunfermline's greatness. How Malcolm the impersonation of all the virtues of the early half mythical time from which Scotland was emerging, - young, brave and generous, gave shelter to the exiled Royal family of England, and fell in love with the gentle Princess Margaret whose resting-place on her weary walk to Dunfermline is seen to this day.

Margaret brought with her the love and practice of the softer virtues and of the arts of civilisation of that time, and a new era began for Scotland with her marriage to Malcolm the first visible sign of which was the founding in Dunfermline of the Church dedicated to the Holy Trinity, in 1071.

Margaret's sons, and her son's sons to the third and fourth generation, imbued with the same religious fervour and in special reverence for her memory, bestowed rich gifts and privileges on her foundation, till under their fostering care it grew into a great and powerful Abbey. So green was the memory of Margaret kept, so personal was the influence she continued to exercise, that one hundred and fifty years after her death her great-great-grandson Alexander II procured her canonisation as a Saint, and her body with that of her husband was removed to the most honourable position in the splendid fane which the piety of her descendants had erected.

For fifty years longer the Abbey continued to grow in power and wealth, but at least the flood of disaster which had poured over Scotland after the death of Alexander III reached Dunfermline, and it was unwillingly forced to provide a winter residence for the invading English King, who, on his departure burnt the house that had sheltered him, in 1304.

We are indebted for a peep at the Abbey in its heyday of prosperity to the English chronicler of Edward's invasion, who says that any three sovereigns could have been accommodated and entertained within the walls, without inconveniencing one another.

Previous to 1304, King Malcolm and Queen Margaret, their sons King Edgar, Alexander I, and David I, and the Princes Edward and Ethelred, King Malcolm IV, King Alexander III, and his Queen and two sons David and Alexander had all found their last resting place in Dunfermline. Two years after the burning of Dunfermline, Robert the Bruce was crowned at Scone, and the monks of Dunfermline proceeded to raise their home again from its ashes, as their king was raising his

kingdom from its servitude. As Kings in those days often found accommodation in the large religious houses, it is often difficult to separate the palace from the monastic buildings to which it was contiguous; but a part of the existing ruin of the palace declared itself as having been built at this time, and within its walls Bruce's son and heir was born in 1323.

Six years later this Abbey received its greatest treasure when the remains of the Bruce were borne from his Castle of Cardross in the west, to be interred within its walls. Here were also interred, Elizabeth, his Queen, Mathilda their daughter, and his sister Christian, the wife of the good Regent Andrew Moray of Bothwell who helped to preserve the kingdom for the Bruce's son. Yet another King James I was born in the palace of Dunfermline in 1394, and his mother Annabella Drummond, wife of Robert III was interred in the Abbey in 1403. When Scottish History was sullied by the murder of King James I in 1423, the peaceful and pleasant Dunfermline was declared unable to protect the person of a King, and the guarding of the young Kings, (most of the Stuarts began with a minority) kept them jealously guarded in the fortified residences of Edinburgh or Stirling. These later Stuarts took to building pleasure houses for themselves, such as Holyrood Palace, Linlithgow and Falkland, but Dunfermline was not entirely forgot as the greater part of the existing palace ruin dates from the time of the later Stuarts, and Defoe in his journey through Scotland in 1722 tells of seeing the coat of arms of James V. and Mary of Guise "still fresh upon the apartments."

Dunfermline became again a favourite residence in the reign of James VI the last King of the Kingdom of Scotland. He gave the lordship of Dunfermline as a marriage gift to his Queen, Anne of Denmark, and three of their children were born here, viz. Princess Elizabeth, Charles, afterwards King Charles I and Prince Robert, the latter died in infancy and was interred in the Abbey, the last Royal Stuart to be buried in Scotland.

James VI revisited Dunfermline after he had acceded to the throne of England; it was also visited by Charles I who there created Sir Robert Kerr, Earl of Ancrum, Lord Kerr of Nisbet etc. his titles being proclaimed by the heralds at the open window of "the great Chamber" of the Palace. Charles II was there the year after his father's execution, and there signed a declaration that he "would have no enemies but the enemies of the Convent, no friends but the friends of the Convent". From the time for his departure, the Palace gradually fell into decay, and it finally became uninhabitable by the roof and a large portion of the walls falling in, in 1708, the year after the Union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland.

In 1560 great damage was done to the Monastic buildings and the Abbey Church by the Lords of the Congregation, “who kest down the Abbey of Dunfermline” in passing to Stirling.

Although all the buildings have been much damaged by time, neglect and wilful destruction, there is much remaining and Dunfermline still means to all lovers of Scottish history the home of Malcolm and Margaret, and the grave of the Bruce, and the existing remains are sufficient to waft the imagination back to their days.

Do we not owe to the succeeding generations of Scotsmen (and women) the duty of preserving what remains, and by leaving them to the surest destroyers of all, time and neglect, are we not more culpable than those who burnt them in the fury of political hate, or cast them down in the fervour of religious bigotry.

It would be a great loss to Scotland if even the remains now existing should gradually disappear, but it would be a mistaken kindness to restore the buildings merely to serve as a show place. They would, after a generation or two inevitably again relapse into a state of neglect and decay, as invariably happens to everything, which serves no useful purpose in the world.

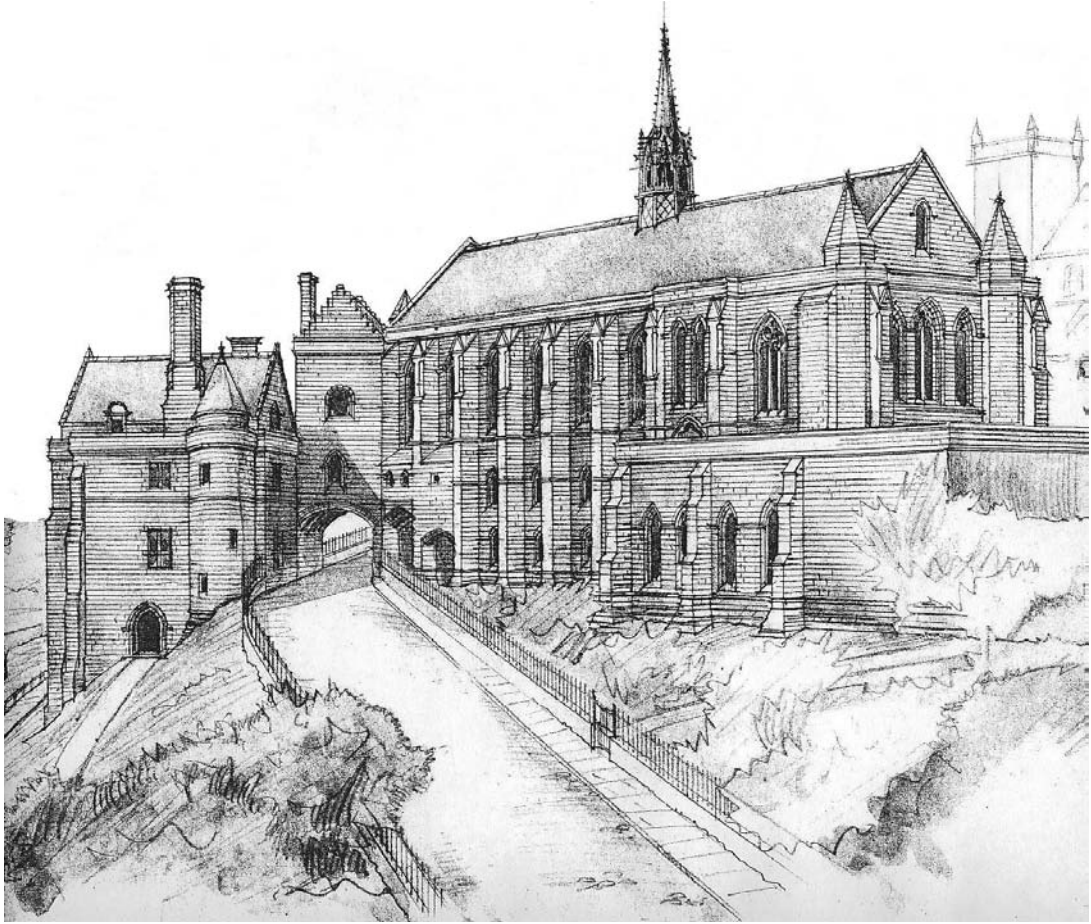
My proposal to erect on the site of that part of the Palace that has disappeared, a new building, and which in conjunction with that part of the Palace still remaining would serve as a Public Library. This building would give at least four times the accommodation of the existing library.

The Fraters Hall or Ref-ectory of the Abbey would be restored as a place of reunion or Museum, and the whole would form one of the most picturesque groups of buildings in Scotland

The accompanying sketches therefore embody not only the preservation of all that is old, but also an adaptation of the buildings to a modern purpose.

The faithfulness of the restoration would preserve all the lessons of history and art, which the buildings contain, and their present day usefulness would ensure their preservation by a generation eminently practical in the midst of its romance.

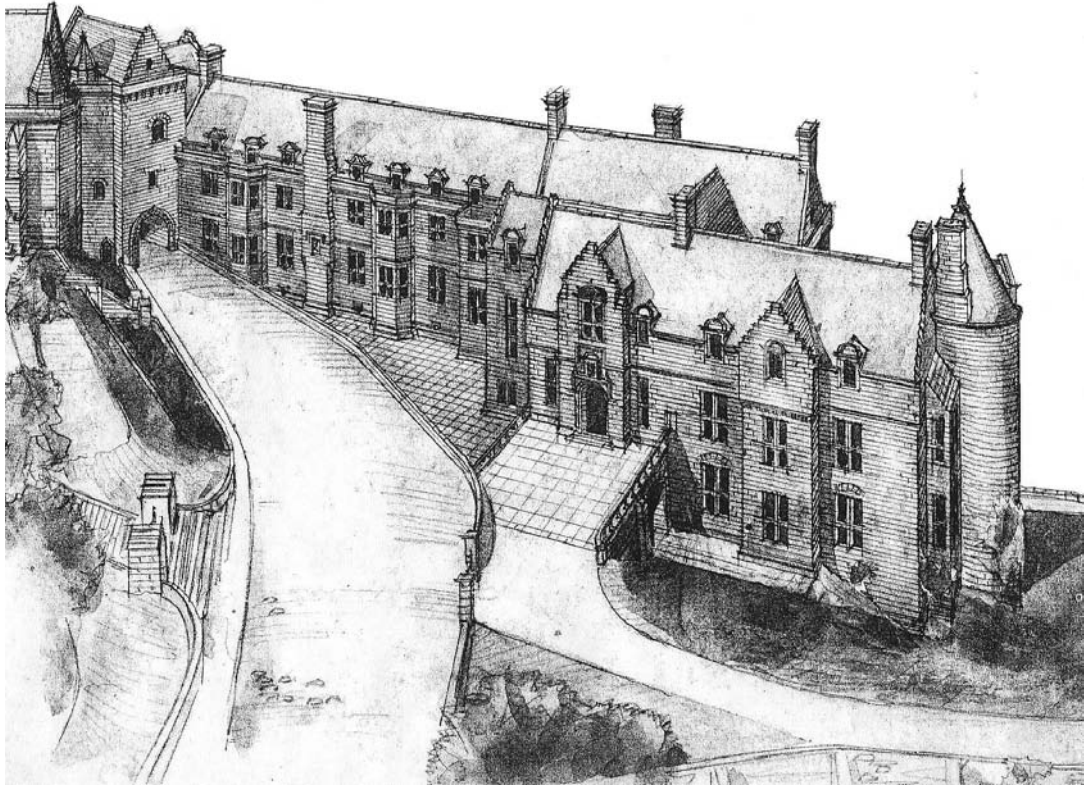




The proposed restored Fraternity (South side).



Fraternity north side.



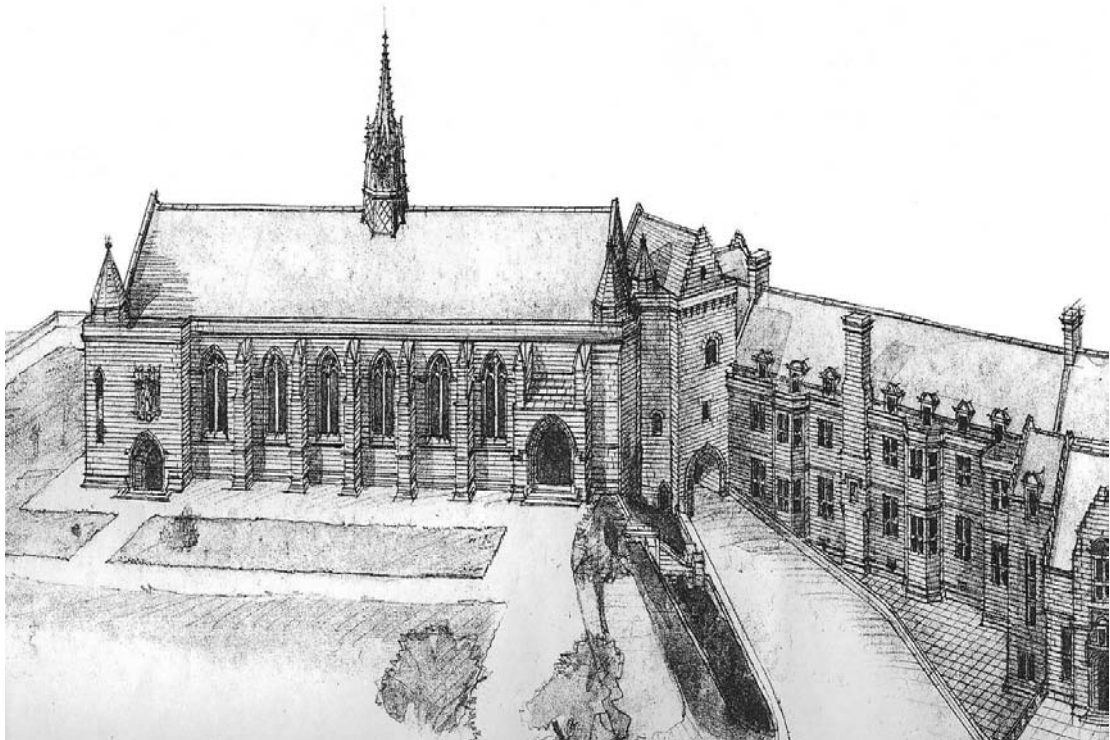
The proposed restored Palace of Dunfermline (North view).



Palace north side.



The proposed restored Palace of Dunfermline (south view)



The proposed restored Frater (North side)

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