

LIFE
OF
GEORGE WISHART
THE SCOTTISH MARTYR
with his
TRANSLATION OF THE HELVETIAN CONFESSION
AND A
GENEALOGICAL HISTORY OF THE FAMILY OF WISHART
WITH AN INDEX
BY THE
REV. CHARLES ROGERS, LL.D.

HISTORIOGRAPHER TO THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY
OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND, AND CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE
HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ENGLAND

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PREFACE.

An inquiry into the life of George Wishart presented few attractions. Believing that he claimed the gift of prophecy, Mr. Hill Burton ¹ describes him as “a visionary.” Mr. Froude ² charges him with preaching without authority and with illegally assuming the priestly office. Professor Lorimer ³ alleges that, in his early ministry, he denied the doctrine of the Atonement. Mr. Tytler ⁴ has sought to prove that he intended murder, by conspiring against the life of Cardinal Beaton. Having ventured on the elucidation of his history, I have investigated the charges brought against him, with care and, I trust, impartiality. The result will be found in these pages. Meanwhile I may summarise my deductions, and say that the martyr has, from the inquiry, come forth unstained. He did not claim prophetic powers; he preached with canonical sanction; he did not act as a priest or ordained clergyman; he taught the doctrine of the Atonement throughout his whole ministry; he did not conspire against Beaton, and if he knew of the conspiracy he condemned it.

I have accompanied the memoir of George Wishart with [4] his translation of the first Helvetian Confession.⁵ I have added a genealogical history of the House of Wishart, which includes a memoir of Sir John Wishart of Pitarrow.

For useful materials I have been much indebted to Mr. J. F. Nicholls, of the City Library, Bristol, the Rev. Dr. Struthers, minister of Prestonpans, and Robert R. Stodart, Esq., of the Lyon Office. I also record my indebtedness to the town clerks of Montrose and Dundee, and to Mr. Walter Macleod, of Edinburgh, who, as a professional searcher of the Public Records, cannot be too highly praised.

GRAMPIAN LODGE, FOREST HILL, S.E.

December 1875.

¹ Burton's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1873, 12mo, vol. iii., p. 251.

² Froude's *History of England*, Lond., 1870, vol. iv., p. 177.

³ Lorimer's *Historical Sketch of the Scottish Reformation*, Lond., 1860.

⁴ § Tytler's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1869, vol iii., pp. 365-374.

⁵ [Better known as the Helvetic Confession.](#)

MEMOIR

GEORGE WISHART.

[5] DURING the reign of James V, the intolerance of Scottish churchmen had reached its height. The clergy were cruel and rapacious. They seized the chief offices in the State, and the people groaned under their misrule. Feigning charity, they practised avarice. Their lives were dissolute in the extreme. The monasteries, formerly the sanctuaries of religion and letters, had become the unhallowed resorts of unblushing profligacy. Divine worship was a thing of unmeaning pomp and empty ceremony. Sacerdotal oppression crushed the national energies; and with the degradation of the sacred office religion began to be despised. Each confessor, as he arose, was dragged before the ecclesiastical tribunal, and might escape death only by a recantation alike public and degrading. The martyrdom at St. Andrews, in 1527, of Patrick Hamilton, nephew of the Earl of Arran, and a descendant of the royal house, sufficiently proved that, in the maintenance of its supremacy, the Roman Church was determined to strike everywhere. But the death of this amiable martyr, instead of repressing, stimulated inquiry, and induced further investigation into the working of a system maintained by the sale of indulgences on the one hand, and upheld by the executioner on the other.

James Wishart of Pitarrow, Clerk of Justiciary, and King's Advocate in the reign of James IV, married, prior to the 13th of April 1512, [6] as his second wife, Elizabeth Learmont. This gentlewoman was a daughter of Learmont of Balcomie, and sister of that James Learmont, whose name as a statesman we shall find associated with public events in the interest of the Reformation. The family were descended from the older House of Learmont of Ercildoune, or Earlston, in the county of Berwick, of which Thomas the Rhymer was the most conspicuous member.

George Wishart, the future martyr, was the only son of James Wishart of Pitarrow, by his second wife. He was probably called George after his maternal grandfather; the name was certainly derived from his mother's family.⁶ The precise date of his birth is unknown, but it has generally been assigned to the year 1513. By the death of his father, which took place before May 1525, his upbringing would devolve on his mother, assisted probably by her brother, James Learmont of Balcomie.

George Wishart chose the clerical profession, in which several members of his House had attained distinction, and wherein his prospects of advancement, owing to the intimacy which subsisted between his family and David Beaton, Abbot of Arbroath, the future cardinal, were not inconsiderable.⁷ As his name does not occur in the registers of any of the Scottish colleges, it is extremely probable that he was sent by his maternal uncle to one or more of the universities of Germany. During the progress of his studies he seems to have embraced the Reformed doctrines. In the year 1534 John Erskine of Dun established at Montrose a school for the Greek language, under the superintendence of a learned Frenchman.⁸ On the

⁶ George Learmont was, in 1531, infeft as "son and heir of umq' James Learmont of Balcomie and Grizel Meldrum." [*infeft, or being infeoffed: (Scot. Law) invested with or given symbolical possession of inheritable property*]

⁷ See Genealogical History of the Family of Wishart, *infra*.

⁸ *Life of John Erskine of Dun*; Wodrow MSS., vol. i.; Biblioth. Coll., Glasg.

retirement of this foreigner, Wishart, who had lately returned from the Continent, took his place. Having imported copies of the Greek Testament, he distributed them among his pupils. [7] This procedure was reported to John Hepburn, Bishop of Brechin, who summoned him to appear in his diocesan court. This was in 1538.⁹

The times were perilous. Wishart saw his danger and fled. Proceeding to Cambridge, he entered the College of Bennet or Corpus Christi. Cambridge was a nursery of the Reformed doctrines. There, in the Augustinian monastery of which Barnes was prior, and Coverdale one of the monks, Bilner and Latimer had preached the new faith. There, too, Cranmer and Ridley had read the Scriptures in the original tongues: the former being a Fellow of Jesus College, the latter Master of Pembroke.

Wishart was probably invited to Cambridge by Dr. Barnes, with whom he may have contracted an intimacy at Wittenberg, where that eminent divine resided with Luther. At Cambridge he was introduced to Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester. By Latimer his acquaintance would be earnestly cultivated. Each could point to oppression at the hands of bigoted churchmen. During a preaching tour which, under a licence from the University of Cambridge, he undertook in 1531, Latimer, in the pulpits of Bristol, denounced the doctrine of purgatory and the invocation of the saints. His prelections were received with favour by the laity; and on the invitation of the mayor, he consented to conduct service on Easter Sunday. Informed of his intention, the local clergy procured an order from the Bishop of Worcester, an Italian named De Ghinuce, prohibiting any clerk from conducting service in the city, without his special sanction. The clergy next accused him of immorality, and as he disproved the charges brought against him, they arraigned him as a heretic in the court of Archbishop Warham. Their prosecution was stopped by the accession of Cranmer to the primacy. Being now bishop of the diocese, which he became in 1535, he was desirous that the Reformed doctrines should be preached in a city where a portion of the laity were willing to receive them, while as bishop he hoped to protect the preacher from molestation. [8] Eager to obey his wishes, and to be useful in the Church as a preacher or evangelist, Wishart agreed to proceed to Bristol.

Obtaining from Latimer orders as a *reader*,¹⁰ Wishart commenced his labours in Bristol by lecturing on Sunday, the 15th of May 1539, in the church of St. Nicholas. The clergy were on the alert. They silenced Latimer eight years before, and in 1525 had compelled Dr. Robert Barnes to bear his faggot,¹¹ Wishart they pounced upon at once, charging him before the mayor and justices with preaching doctrines condemned by the Church.

Arresting the preacher, the mayor sought direction as to further procedure, from the Recorder, Lord Cromwell, in the following letter:

⁹ Petrie's *History of the Catholick Church*, part ii., p. 182.

¹⁰ This was an inferior order in the Church. The reader possessed a faculty to preach, but he was not under the vow of celibacy like ecclesiastics of a higher grade. Wishart is styled "the reader" in the correspondence which follows.

¹¹ Seyer's *History of Bristol*, 1821, 2 vols. 8vo, vol. iL, p. 215. [[faggot: a bundle of kindling for burning at the stake.](#)]

“It pleases your honourable Lordship to be notified that certain accusations are made and had by Sir John Kerell,¹² Deane of Bristowe, deputy of the Bishop of Worcester, our ordinary, and diverse others, inhabitants of Bristowe foresaid, against one Geo. Wischarde, a Scottishman born, lately being before your honourable Lordship; which accusations the said dean and other inhabitants aforesaid have presented before me, the Mayor of Bristowe and justices of peace. And the same accusations I have received, sending the same to your said honourable Lordship. And, furthermore, the Chamberlain and the Deane of Bristowe shall signify to your honourable Lordship, the very truth in the premises, to whom we desire you to give credence. And then our Lord preserve your honourable Lordship in health and wealth, according to your own heartiest desire.

“At Bristowe the 9th of June, Anno Regis Henrici VIII. xxxi.

“By me Thomas Jeffryes, *Mayor of Bristol*.

“To the Right Honorable Lord,

“Lord Privy Seal.”¹³

[9] Wishart in the hands of Lord Cromwell was safe. But hostile influences were at work. On Monday the 16th of May, the day subsequent to the lecture in St. Nicholas’ church, the Duke of Norfolk introduced, in the House of Peers, the “Bloody Act of the Six Articles,”¹⁴ intended to restore Catholic ascendancy, and prove a scourge to those who maintained Protestant sentiments. In June, the Act passed both Houses of Parliament and, receiving the royal assent, became law. Forthwith, ecclesiastical courts, assuming the worst features of the Inquisition, began to persecute to extremity those who upheld the new opinions. For refusing to subscribe the articles, Bishop Latimer was thrown into prison, and compelled to resign his bishopric. The persecution which overtook him was extended to his *protégé*, the reader. An indictment by the Bristol clergy against Wishart was laid before an ecclesiastical court, consisting of the Primate, Archbishop Cranmer, who still halted between two opinions, Clark, Bishop of Bath, Repps, Bishop of Norwich, and Sampson, Bishop of Chichester. Advised by Cranmer, Wishart consented to retract. Receiving his submission, the court ordained him to carry a faggot in St. Nicholas’ church, Bristol, on Sunday the 13th of July, and in Christ church, of the same city, on the following Sunday.¹⁵ The heresy of which Wishart was accused is mentioned in a contemporary record belonging to the corporation of Bristol, known as the *Mayor’s Calendar*. Commenced in 1479 by Robert Riccart, the town-clerk, the record was continued under the direction of the municipal authorities; it is now preserved among the muniments¹⁶ of the city. Of the entry relating to Wishart, having obtained a photograph, we present a facsimile on the opposite page [\[see Appendix\]](#). It reads thus:

“1639, H. VIII. xxx, Mem.

“That this year, the 15th of May, a Scot named George Wysard, [10] set forth his lecture in St. Nicholas Church of Bristol, the most blasphemous heresy that was ever heard: openly declaring

¹² The name of the dean was Kearne.

¹³ From the Original in the Public Record Office.

¹⁴ Froude’s *History of England*, Lond., 1870, vol. iii., pp. 199-217.

¹⁵ *Memoirs, Historical and Biographical*, vol. ii. , p. 223.

¹⁶ [Muniments: deeds and other documentary evidence of title to land.](#)

that Christ nother (sic) has nor could he merit for him, nor yet for us. This heresy brought many of the Commons of this town into a great error. And diverse of them were persuaded by that heretical lecture to heresy. Whereupon the said stiff-necked Scot was accused by Mr. John Kerne, Deane of this Diocese of Worcester, and soon after he was sent to the most Reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, before whom and others; that is, to signify the Bishops of Bath, Norwich, and Chichester, with others such as Doctors, etc. And before them he was examined, convicted, and condemned, in and upon the detestable heresy above mentioned. Whereupon he was enjoined to bear a faggot in St. Nicholas Church forsaid, and the parish of the same, the 13th of July as foresaid: And in Christ Church and its parish, the 20th of July abovesaid. This Injunction was duly executed in the form aforesaid.”

Under the belief that the words “Christ nother has nor could merit for him, nor yet for us,” represent the charge brought against the preacher, Mr. Seyer, in his “History of Bristol,” remarks that Wishart “seems to have adopted notions similar to those which were afterwards brought to a system under the name of Socinianism.”¹⁷ Adopting a similar view of the passage, Professor Lorimer writes:

“It does not admit of a doubt that Wishart had fallen at this early period of his life, while his views of Divine truth were still immature, into some serious misapprehension on the subject of the merits of Christ and the way of human redemption. If the Popish churchmen of Bristol had been his only judges, we might have been justified in receiving, with hesitation, so strange an accusation; because he was no doubt even then a vigorous opponent of Popish doctrines. And it was probably his zeal in attacking the doctrine of mediatory merit, in the case of the Romish saints, which carried him into the heretical extreme of denying the mediatory merit of the Redeemer himself. But as he was sent up to London to be tried by a tribunal over which Cranmer presided, it is only fair to conclude that the sentence which that tribunal pronounced upon him was just.”¹⁸

[11] These conclusions are unwarranted. As Wishart preached at Bristol under the sanction of Bishop Latimer, it may surely be assumed that his doctrines did not materially differ from those of his patron. And the charge of Socinianism is further rebutted in words which he used in translating the Helvetian Confession not long afterwards. That translation contains the following sentence:

“As he [Christ] only is our mediator and intercessor, host and sacrifice, bishop, lord, and our king, we also acknowledge and confess him alone to be our atonement and ransom, satisfaction, expiation; our wisdom, our defence, and our only deliverer; refusing utterly all other means of life and salvation, except thus by Christ only.”

In the interval between quitting intercourse with Latimer — immediately before his visit to Bristol — and his living on the Continent soon after that visit, was Wishart likely to deny the fundamental doctrines of Protestant theology? Does the statement of the Bristol chronicler warrant so improbable a conclusion? Read in their present form, the words descriptive of Wishart’s teaching are confused and meaningless. In asserting the general proposition that Christ’s merit did not avail for others, was he likely to strengthen the affirmation by a special

¹⁷ Seyer’s *History of Bristol*, vol. ii., p. 223.

¹⁸ *The Scottish Reformation: An Historical Sketch*, by Dr. Peter Lorimer, Lond., 1860, pp. 92-96.

allusion to himself? A chief error of the Romish Church, against which the early English Reformers preached, was the worship of the Virgin. By inserting the word *mother* before “nother” in the record, the passage obtains an intelligibility which at present it lacks. Thus:

“George Wysard set forth his lecture, in St. Nicholas Church of Bristol, the most blasphemous heresy that was ever heard; openly declaring that Christ [’s mother] nother (neither) has nor could merit for him, nor yet for us.”

[12] Finding, in immediate juxtaposition, two words similar in form, as are *mother* and *nother*, the engrossing clerk had inadvertently omitted one of them, a species of error into which transcribers are prone to fall. Had the preacher affirmed, as part of his creed, that the Redeemer’s merit did not extend to himself personally, the Romish clergy would probably have permitted this portion of his doctrine to pass uncondemned. But Wishart certainly taught that the Virgin mother had no merit either for her Divine Son, or for any others.

In connection with Wishart’s persecution at Bristol, three remarkable letters are preserved in the Cottonian MSS.¹⁹ These letters have different signatures, but are all evidently written by one person who, residing at Bristol, was intimately conversant with the habits and peculiarities of the leading citizens. With the signature of William Ryppe, the following letter bears to be dispatched from Coventry to Thomas White in Bread Street, Bristol:

“‘Grace and peace be with us.’

“O you enemies to God’s word, why have you accused the same young faithful man who read the lector, the very word of God; who did nothing that scripture would not bear him to do, and to discharge his conscience? Though the king and his counsel, with his clergy, have made such an ordinance, yet those who are learned will leave the king’s ordinance and stick to the ordinance of God, who is the King of all kings. And we are bound to die in good quarrel and leave the ordinance of man, and there this good young man is troubled; but I trust you will all repent of it shortly, when my lord Privy Seal ²⁰ hears of it. And you foolish mayor, and that knave [13] Thomas White, with the liar Abynton,²¹ the prater Pacy,²² and flattering Hutton,²³ and drunken

¹⁹ Brit. Mus., Cotton MSS., Cleopatra EV., fol. 390.

²⁰ The celebrated Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, who held office as Recorder of Bristol, was also Keeper of the Privy Seal. In the books of the city chamberlain is the following entry, respecting a balance of salary due to Lord Essex at the time of his execution: “For much as the £20 charged in this side, paid to the Lord of Essex, late Recorder of this town, for his fee due to him at the feast of the Nativity of our Lord God in Anno 1540, which customarily used to be paid at one time, and because the said Lord of Essex was beheaded before that feast in the same year, anno 1540, we, the auditors, find that the £20 ought not to be allowed on this account.”

²¹ The Abyndons were an old Bristol family. Henry Abyndon, Bachelor of Music at Cambridge in 1463, was a member of King’s Chapel, and Master of St. Catherine’s Hospital, Brightbow, Bedminster. In 1550 there is mention of “Abyndon’s Inn.” This inn was rebuilt before 1565, and was then known as the *new inn*. The individual mentioned in the letter was probably Richard Abyndon, who was mayor of Bristol in 1526, and again in 1537. In 1529 he was elected M.P. In an old calendar of the city, the following entry occurs: “On the 17th of July there was such thundering and lightning which lasted from 8 o’clock at night untill 4 next morning, which was fearful to hear; but when Richard Abbingdon deceased, the thunder also ceased presently.”

²² “The prater Pacy” was probably the vicar of All-Hallows; but a person of this name was mayor of Bristol in 1532. [*prater*: someone who talks a lot, esp. someone who talks too much or foolishly.]

²³ Hutton cannot be identified.

Tonell,²⁴ foolish Coke,²⁵ dreamy Smyth,²⁶ and the niggardly Thome,²⁷ hasty Sylke,²⁸ strutting Elyott,²⁹ simple Hart,³⁰ and grinning Pryn,³¹ proud Addamys,³² and poor Woddus,³³ the sturdy parson of St. Stephens, the proud Vicar of St. Leonard's, the lying parson of St. John's,³⁴ the drunken parson of St. Ewens,³⁵ the brayling³⁶ works of the calendars, the prating Vicar of All-Hallows, [14] with diverse other knave preists, shall all repent this doing. Farewell the enemys of the word of God.

“Written in haste at the noble city of Coleyn
by your loving William Ryppe of Bristol.”

(Inserted on the margin)

“The worshipful Mr. Thomas White in Breadstreet in Bristol this letter is delivered with speed from Coventry.”

The second letter bears to have been written at Rome, by Thomas Abynton. It is addressed on the margin:

“To the worshipful Mr. Thomas Abynton, in Bristow,
this letter is delivered from Croyden to Bristol.”

The letter proceeds:

“Yet once again to the enemies of God's word, as you know the mayor, very fool to the king's grace, and enemies to my lord Privy Seal and to your own self.

²⁴ Tonnell was mayor of Bristol in 1529.

²⁵ Coke was mayor in 1535, and M.P. in 1537.

²⁶ Smyth was sheriff of Bristol in 1533.

²⁷ Nicholas Thome was a wealthy shipowner, and founder of a school at Bristol. He served as sheriff in 1529. In 1537 he represented the borough in Parliament, and in 1545 was elected mayor. He died August 19th, 1546. His portrait by Holbein is extant.

²⁸ A person named Sylke was sheriff of Bristol in 1530; and the “proud vicar of St. Leonards” was also Thomas Sylke. Both belonged to an old Bristol family of the name. William Sylke was rector of All-Hallows in 1264, when “Isonde, relict (widow) of Hugh Calvestone, grants lands to the Church, on payment of a yearly rent of a penny or a pair of gloves at her option.” By another deed, dated about the same period, William Sylke “gives, grants, and confirms in fee, for the souls of his father, John Sylke, his mother, Isabella, and all his predecessors and successors,” money “to keep a lamp for ever burning in the church of All-Hallows” — the said money to be derived from land in Seatepull Street, Bristol. In 1547 a Mrs Sylke bequeathed to the poor of St. Thomas's parish, three shillings for annual distribution.

²⁹ Robert Ellyott was sheriff of Bristol in 1522, mayor in 1541, and M.P. in 1542. In the patents of 1501 and 1502, for the discovery and settlement of the lands in America, his father, Hugh Ellyott, was associated with Ward, Ashehurst, Thomas, and Thome, merchants of Bristol.

³⁰ Hart was sheriff of Bristol in 1536.

³¹ Pryn was sheriff in 1537.

³² Addamys was mayor of Bristol in 1546.

³³ Woddus was sheriff of Bristol in 1535.

³⁴ Thomas Tasker.

³⁵ Waterhouse.

³⁶ *Bray*: to grind in a mortar; here it refers to the oppressive liturgical calendar.

“O you knaves and enemys to the word of God, now you may see what cruelty you used in putting this faithful Reader in prison, and now are glad to put him out again. If you had not, you should have been burned out of your housing. You shall repent this doing, if some of us live, and specially some of the knave priests. Such as the same proud knave, the Vicar of St. Leonard’s,³⁷ rolling his night cap of velvet every day and not able to change a man a groat,³⁸ and the drunken parson of St. John’s,³⁹ and that perpetual knave, the parson of St. Stephen’s, and brazen-faced knave of All-hallows, babbling-lipped knave, the priest of St. Leonard’s, with long Sir Harry, and little Sir Thomas, with the vicar of St. Austin’s, the old fool. All these of this diocese who have a cure will go like knaves to sing *Ave regitia* ⁴⁰ when the bishop comes,⁴¹ for they having been warned the last visitation, and take this my warning all you knaves.

“Now to the Temporalty. That same knave, Thomas Whyte, [15] now begins to shrink in his harness, but that will not help him. And the foolish mayor must follow many a knave’s counsel, and at the instance of the two apothecaries,⁴² the false knaves that ever was Shreves this mayor, and wily knaves; but they will smart for this year. And that flattering Hutton, and drunken Pacy, and false town clerk.⁴³ Also the knaves look for the subtle Recorder; but when he comes, if he does not hold with the true word of God, my lord Privy Seal will bid him walk like the knave he is. Therefore I advise you, beware and discharge the sureties of the Reader by that time; or else you will repent of it, for he will make as many as twenty of you [do it] if need requires. Fare you well all you knaves, all who hold against the same honest man, the Reader, for he regards the King of heaven before the king of England. And thus fare you well. You will know more of my mind when our bishop comes from London.

“Your loving friend Thomas Abynton, in all haste
from Rome, the 10th of January.”

The third letter is addressed to Thomas Sylke, Vicar of St. Leonard’s; and as the writer demands that the reader should be set free before the bishop was informed of his detention, it was probably the first written.

“To the stinking knave Sylke, Vicar of St. Leonard’s.

“You stinking knave, I recently tossed a letter into your chamber to deliver to the lying knave Thomas or Richard Abyngton, but you, like a knave, must deliver the letter to that knave Thomas Whyte. Be sure you will lose one day one of your ears, and that ear it is middle lent Sunday. Remember my saying, I write to you in a charitable manner so that you may deliver the Reader before the Bishop knows of it. For when he hears of it he will ruffle among you for it. The knave

³⁷ Thomas Sylke was vicar of St. Leonard’s.

³⁸ *Groat*: a silver coin worth four pennies. Today we might say, “change a man a dime’s worth.”

³⁹ Thomas Tasker.

⁴⁰ *Ave Regitia*: a liturgical hymn referring to the Virgin Mary.

⁴¹ Bishop Richard, who was employed as a royal commissioner at Bristol for the surrender of the monastery.

⁴² *Originally poticarys*. One of these two *apothecaries* was David Harris. He was sheriff in 1539, and mayor in 1551. When Richard Sharp was suffering at the stake for heresy, in 1557, he was encouraged by one Thomas Hale, a shoemaker. This act so enraged Alderman Harris that he had Hale seized in his bed, and committed to Newgate (*prison*); he was afterwards condemned and burned. When Queen Elizabeth visited Bristol in 1573, David Harris was ejected from the office of alderman. The other “*poticary*” was probably a relative.

⁴³ The town-clerk was John Colys.

Shreves is [16] a great occasion of the same poor man that the readers trouble, and especially that knave Harris, the apothecary. There is another knave Harris ⁴⁴ in town, as privy and wily a knave as ever lived, crafty and subtle, and a great enemy to the word of God. But when the Bishop comes, he will handle him in his kind; even if the same knave Nicoll Thorne ⁴⁵ favors him, he will not help him, nor that hypocrite his wife. O you hard-hearted knaves who will not favor the word of God, when such a faithfull yong man took pains to read the true word of God, and you troubled him for his labor. May you not be sorry? Yes, truly. And if you had not rather delivered him out of prison, he would have come out in spite of your teeth; like knaves (as you all are), I will advise you to discharge his sureties. Do not say you have no warning. For if the Pointmakers ⁴⁶ rise, some of you will lease their ears ⁴⁷ and do that shortly. I understand you will do nothing till the knave Recorder comes. I do not mean my good lord Privy Seal. I do not call *him* a knave; but I call Davy Broke a knave, ⁴⁸ and a large knave, and that drunken Gervys, ⁴⁹ that lubber Antony Payne, ⁵⁰ and slovenly William Yong, ⁵¹ and that double knave William Chester. ⁵² For sometimes he is with us and sometimes with the knaves. But he will long be a knave for it, and his wife a foolish drabbe, ⁵³ for she is the enemy of God's word.

“Fare you well for his time, your loving frend, the good parson of St. Stephen's, in Bedminster, besides the king's town of Faterford. Commend me to all the knave priests who are the enemies of God's word. For if we and the bishop together live, they will not trouble this town unless the king fails us. For the knaves have no learning, nor will any learn. Yet once again, fare you well.

“By your loving David Harris, apothecary, and that lowly knave
William Fay, from the port of St. Mary.

“Commend me to that grinning knave, the false town clerk. [17] he will repent other things; you know what I mean. Commend me to old foolish Sprynge, ⁵⁴ and to the angry Pykes, ⁵⁵ with diverse others who do not come to my mind now, but I will make you aware another time.”

Having, by burning his faggot, escaped death as the result of his evangelical labours at Bristol, Wishart proceeded to the Continent. According to Bishop Lesley, his contemporary, “he remained long in Germany.” ⁵⁶ In defending himself during his trial at St. Andrews he referred to his having sailed on the Rhine; and as he translated into English the first Confession of the

⁴⁴ Rector of the grammar school.

⁴⁵ Nicholas Thorn.

⁴⁶ The pointmakers were a flourishing guild at Bristol.

⁴⁷ *Orig.* “lese theyre eares,” a sarcastic play on “lend me your ears,” or perhaps “lease their wares” (the guild's).

⁴⁸ David Broke was mayor of the city in 1527.

⁴⁹ Gervys was sheriff in 1526.

⁵⁰ Antony Payne was sheriff in 1534. [*Lubber: an awkward stupid person.*]

⁵¹ William Yong was mayor in 1540.

⁵² William Chester was mayor in 1538. In the following year he obtained a grant of the site of the Blackfriars monastery. When in May 1549 there was an insurrection in the city, under Pykes' mayoralty, he appeared for the malcontents, and obtained a pardon for them from Edward VI.

⁵³ *Drabbe: a slovenly, promiscuous, or disreputable woman.*

⁵⁴ Mayor in 1540.

⁵⁵ Sheriff in 1533.

⁵⁶ Lesley's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1838, p. 191.

Helvetian Churches, it is probable that he visited Switzerland. In 1542 he returned to Cambridge, and there sought employment as a tutor. Respecting this portion of his career, we obtain the following particulars in a communication made to Foxe, the martyrologist, by Emery Tylney, one of his pupils:

“About the year of our Lord 1543 there was, in the university of Cambridge, one Master George Wischart, commonly called Master George of Bennet’s College, who was a man of tall stature, broad-headed, and on his head a French cap of the best [quality]. Judged of melancholy complexion by his physiognomy, black-haired, long bearded, handsome of personage, well-spoken of in his country of Scotland, courteous, lowly, lovely, glad to teach, desirous to learn, and well-travelled. He had on him for his habit or clothing, never but a mantle frieze gown⁵⁷ down to the shoes, a black Millian fustain dublet,⁵⁸ and plain black hose, course new canvas for his shirts, and white falling bands and cuffs at the hands. All of this apparel he gave to the poor, some weekly, some monthly, some quarterly, as he liked, except his Frenche cap, which he kept the whole year of my being with him.

He was a man who was modest, temperate, fearing God, hating covetousness, for his charity never had an end, night, morn, or day. He forbare one meal in three, one day in four for the most part, except to somewhat comfort his nature. He lay hard upon a pile of straw, [18] coarse new canvas sheets which, when he changed them, he gave away. He commonly had by his bedside a tub of water in which (his people being in bed, the candle put out, and all quiet) he used to bathe himself; as I being very young and assured often heard him, and in one light night discerned him. He loved me tenderly, and I him, just as effectually for my age. He taught with great modesty and gratuity, so that some of his people thought him severe, and would have slain him, but the Lord was his defence. And he, after due correction for their malice, amended them by good exhortation, and he went his way. O that the Lord had left him to me, his poor boy, so that he might have finished what he had begun! For in his Religion, he was as you see here in the rest of his life, when he went into Scotland with various men of the Nobility who came to King Henry VIII for a treaty. His learning was no less sufficient than his desire, always pressed and ready to do good in that he was able both in the house privately, and in the school publicly, professing and reading diverse authors.

“If I were to declare his love toward me and all men, his charity to the poor, in giving, relieving, caring, helping, providing, indeed infinitely studying how to do good to all, and hurt to none, I would sooner lack words than just cause to commend him.

“All this I testify with my whole heart and truth of this godly man. He that made all, governs all, and shall judge all, knows I speak the truth, that the simple may be satisfied, the arrogant confounded, the hypocrite disclosed. Emery Tylney.”⁵⁹

To complete the long-pending negotiations with the English Government for the marriage of Edward, Prince of Wales, with the infant Queen Mary, commissioners from Scotland proceeded to London in June 1543. These commissioners were the Earl of Glencairn, Sir George Douglas, Sir William Hamilton of Sanquhar, James Learmont of Balcomie, and Henry

⁵⁷ *Frieze or frise*: a heavy, coarse woolen fabric with a rough, napped surface on one side.

⁵⁸ A doublet is a snug-fitting jacket shaped and fitted to a man's body. Until the end of the 15th century, the doublet was most often worn under another layer of clothing such as a gown, mantle, or houppelande when in public.

⁵⁹ Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, ed. 1596, p. 1155.

Balnaves. They met the English commissioners at Greenwich on the 1st of July, when the marriage treaty was settled, and certain differences between the countries were amicably adjusted.⁶⁰ When the commissioners left Scotland, [19] the governor Arran, then a professor of the Reformed faith, was at variance with Cardinal Beaton. And as no reconciliation between them seemed probable, Learmont of Balcomie regarded the season as especially suitable for his relative leaving Cambridge and returning to the north. Accepting his counsel, Wishart joined the commissioners, and accompanied them to Scotland, which they reached before the 31st of July.⁶¹

Wishart intended at once to enter upon the duties of an evangelist. But the altered condition of public affairs rendered such a proceeding absolutely dangerous. Beaton had regained his authority, and the weak governor, in becoming reconciled to him, evidenced a desire to perpetuate his friendship by publicly abjuring (rejecting) the Reformed faith.

Amidst the perils of the time, Wishart found a retreat in his native home, the mansion of Pitarrow.⁶² There he remained from July 1543 till the spring of 1545, dividing his time between the study of theology, and the cultivation of the arts. When the old mansion of Pitarrow was being demolished in 1802,⁶³ the workmen laid open a series of well-executed paintings, under the wainscoting which covered the walls of the great hall.

These paintings were in bright colours. One over the fireplace represented the Pope on horseback, attended by a company of cardinals, uncovered. In front stood a white palfrey,⁶⁴ richly caparisoned (adorned), held by a person in elegant apparel. Beyond was the Cathedral of St. Peter, of which the doors were open, as if to receive the procession. Under the painting were these lines:

[20]

“In Papam.

*“Laus tua non tua fraus: virtus, non gloria rerum
Scandere te fecit hoc decus eximium.*

*Dat sua pauperibus gratis nee munera curat
Curia Papalis quod more percipimus.*

Haec carmina potuis legenda caneros imitando.”

Literally rendered, the inscription reads:

*“Your merit, not your craft; your worth, not your ambition, raised you to this pitch of eminence.
The Papal Curia, as we well know, gives freely to the poor, nor grudges its gifts.”*

But as the writer informs us, his verses are to be read by imitating crabs — that is, backwards — from which a very different meaning is derived — thus:

⁶⁰ Rymer's *Foedera*, vol. xiv., pp. 786-791.

⁶¹ Sadler's *State Papers*, vol. i., pp. 235, 242-245. Knox, who mentions Wishart's return to Scotland with the commissioners, erroneously states that the event took place in 1544 (Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 102).

⁶² Pitarrow is situated in a rural district, fifteen miles from Montrose, on the east coast of Forfarshire.

⁶³ Dr. George Cook's *History of the Scottish Reformation*, vol. i., p. 272; *New Statistical Acct.*, Kincardineshire, p. 81.

⁶⁴ *Palfrey*: a gentle riding horse.

“The Papal Curia, as we well know, grudges its gifts, nor bestows on the poor freely. To this pitch of eminence your ambition raised you, not your worth; your craft, not your merit.”

Knox writes: “Wishart excelled in all human science.”⁶⁵ During his first residence in Germany he may have acquired the art of painting, and he might have studied under Holbein. The brilliance of colour apparent in the Pitarrow paintings would certainly assign them to an artist of the German school. To the narrative of Wishart’s character, supplied to Foxe, Tylney adds these lines, which he styles:

“DOGMATA EJUSDEM GEORGII.

“Fides sola sine operibus justificat;
Opera ostendunt et ostentant fidem;
Romana ecclesia putativé caput mundi,
Lex canonica caput Papae,
Missae ministerium, mysterium iniquitatis.”⁶⁶

There is here, as in the lines on the painting at Pitarrow, a double meaning. This bipartite arrangement is intended:

[21]

“Fides solasine operibus justificat
Opera ostendunt et ostentant...fidem
Romana ecclesiaputative caput mundi
Lex canonica..... caput Papae
Missae ministerium mysterium iniquitatis.”

In the first division, Rome asserts: “This is the one faith. The Roman Church, the canon law, the service of the mass, prove and show good works.” In the other, the preacher presents his confession: “Papal supremacy, that mystery of iniquity, which thinks itself the head of the world, justifies faith without works.”

It would be rash to affirm that a similarity of manner and sentiment, striking as it certainly is, proves that the *dogmata* and the Pitarrow inscription proceeded from the same pen. But the assertion will be allowed that George Wishart — who wrote the *dogmata*, translated the *Helvetian Confession*, and died in testimony of his hatred of Romish error — might have composed an inscription in his paternal mansion which condemned the Papacy. Such an inscription he was more likely to compose than any other member of his House whose history is known. And if he inscribed his ancestral hall with his pen, may he not likewise have adorned it with his brush? Who more likely to illustrate a painting than the painter himself? The paintings at Pitarrow were executed on the plastered wall; the wainscoting which afterwards concealed them was introduced subsequent to Wishart’s period.

Tired of his prolonged seclusion at Pitarrow, Wishart determined to resume his duties as an evangelist. In reading the Scriptures to the people in their native tongue, he had the authority

⁶⁵ Knox’s *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 125. [Wishart played a significant role in John Knox’s conversion to the Protestant faith. Knox served as Wishart’s bodyguard, and was deeply influenced by his teachings.](#)

⁶⁶ Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, ed. 1596, p. 1155.

of the State;⁶⁷ and being in reader's orders, he possessed as an instructor the sanction of the Church. Renting a house at Montrose, the "next to the church except one,"⁶⁸ he there read and explained the Scriptures to all who came.

[22] After a time he removed to Dundee, where he publicly read and expounded the Epistle to the Romans. His prelections, conducted within eleven miles of the Castle of St. Andrews, could not long escape the notice of Cardinal Beaton who, since his reconciliation with the governor, possessed a nearly absolute authority. The cardinal might not prevent the reading of the Scriptures; he might not close, save on a specific charge, a mouth opened by the Church. But one who is disposed to persecute may readily find excuse to justify his interference. Charging Wishart with convoking the lieges without the royal sanction, he procured from the queen regent and the governor a proclamation, calling on him to desist. By one Robert Mill, a magistrate of Dundee, who had professed the Reformed doctrines, but had lately abjured them, the proclamation was handed to the preacher as he conducted service.

"He remained," writes Knox, "a little time with his eyes bent towards heaven, and thereafter looking sorrowfully to the speaker and the people. He said: God is witness that I never intended your trouble but your comfort. Yes, your trouble is more dolorous to me than it is to yourselves. But I am assured that to refuse God's Word, and to chase from you His messengers, shall not preserve you from trouble, but it shall bring you into it. For God shall send to you messengers who will not be afraid of horning⁶⁹ nor yet banishment. I have offered to you the Word of Salvation, and with the hazard of my life I have remained among you. Now you yourselves refuse me, and therefore I must leave my innocence to be declared by God. If it is long prosperous with you, I am not led by the Spirit of Truth; but if unlooked-for trouble apprehends you, acknowledge the cause and turn to God, for He is merciful."⁷⁰

Among those present when Mill served the proclamation was the Earl Marischal,⁷¹ who entreated the preacher to disregard it, [23] or to accompany him to the north and there prosecute his ministry. But Wishart had promised to the Earl of Glencairn⁷² that he would next preach in Ayrshire, and he proceeded there at once.

Ayrshire was included in the see of Glasgow, and Gavin Dunbar, the archbishop, was determined to check in his diocese the spread of heretical opinions. Informed that Wishart was preaching in Ayr, he went there with a body of attendants, and took possession of the

⁶⁷ An Act of the Estates was proclaimed on the 19th March 1543, declaring that it should be lawful for all men to read the Old and New Testaments in the mother tongue, and providing that "no man preach to the contrary upon pain of death."

⁶⁸ Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 125; Petrie's *History of the Catholick Church*, Hague, 1662, folio, p. 182.

⁶⁹ Putting to the horn, *i.e.*, being denounced a rebel. This menace would, as matter of course, be contained in the proclamation,

⁷⁰ Knox's *History*, Edin., 1846, vol. i., pp. 125, 126.

⁷¹ By Sir Ralph Sadler, in a report to Henry VIII., dated 27th March 1543, the Earl Marischal is described as "a goodly young gentleman, well given to his Majesty." He was very friendly to the Reformation. During the civil wars in the reign of Queen Mary he shut himself in his Castle of Dunottar, and consequently became known as William of the Tower. He died about the year 1581 (Sadler's *State Papers*, vol. i., p. 126).

⁷² William Cunningham, fourth Earl of Glencairn, was in 1526 appointed Lord High Treasurer. He early attached himself to the Reformers, and bore a conspicuous part in their early struggles; he died in 1547. His son Alexander, fifth earl, is historically known as "the good earl."

church. Lord Glencairn and George Crawford of Loch Norris,⁷³ attended by their vassals, also proceeded thither to defend the preacher. But Wishart discommended violence. He invited the people to accompany him to the market cross, where, writes Knox, “he made so notable a sermon that his very enemies themselves were confounded.” Dunbar preached in the parish church which he had usurped. Inexpert in public teaching, he commended his office, and promised a more edifying discourse on his return.⁷⁴

Wishart prosecuted his labours chiefly in the district of Kyle. For a time he occupied the parish church of Galston, under the protection of John Lockhart of Barr, a Protestant landowner.⁷⁵ Invited to preach at Mauchline, an adjoining parish, he consented; but the use of the church was resisted on the plea that an elegant shrine preserved in it might be injured by the populace. [24] Among the opposers were George Campbell of Monkgarswood, Mungo Campbell of Brounside, and George Read of Tempiland. At their instance, Sir Hugh Campbell of Loudoun, sheriff of the county, prohibited the use of the church, and caused the doors to be watched by a civic guard. This procedure was obnoxious to an influential landowner, Hew Campbell of Kinzeanleugh,⁷⁶ who, with his friends and followers, sought to overpower the guard and enter the edifice by force. Wishart dissuaded Campbell from exciting public strife. “Brother,” he said, “Christ Jesus is as potent in the fields as in the kirk. He himself oftener preached on the mountain, in the desert, and at the seaside, than in the temple. God sends by me the Word of Peace, and the blood of no man must be shed this day for the preaching of it.” Having calmed his friend’s vehemence, Wishart proceeded to a meadow, and there from a stone fence preached to an eager crowd. His discourse lasted three hours. It was attended by the conversion of Laurence Rankin, the laird of Sheill, a man whose corrupt life had been notorious.⁷⁷

Under the protection of the Earls of Cassilis,⁷⁸ and Glencairn, and others, Wishart had preached in Ayrshire about four weeks, when he was recalled to Dundee. A terrible epidemic had broken out in the place four days after his departure,⁷⁹ and his return was urgently entreated. A contemporary chronicler informs us that in August 1545 a fatal pestilence visited all the burghs of Scotland.⁸⁰ In that month it is probable Wishart returned to Dundee. His departure from Kyle grieved many who had become attached to his ministry. [25] To their entreaties that he would remain among them, he replied that his former hearers “were in

⁷³ Now called Dumfries House, a seat of the Marquess of Bute.

⁷⁴ Knox’s *History*, Edin., 1846, vol. i., p. 127.

⁷⁵ John Lockhart of Barr is, in a legal instrument dated Glasgow, 20th of November 1510, nominated procurator and assignee of Mr. Patrick Shaw, Vicar of Monkton, about to set out for Rome. He is noticed in the rental book of the diocese of Glasgow in 1553 (Diocesan Registers of Glasgow, vol. i., p. 151; vol. ii., p. 381).

⁷⁶ Hew Campbell of Kinzeanleugh was a cadet of the House of Loudoun. His son, Robert Campbell of Kinzeanleugh, was a zealous friend of John Knox and a devoted promoter of the Reformation.

⁷⁷ Knox’s *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 128.

⁷⁸ Gilbert Kennedy, third Earl of Cassilis, was taken prisoner at the battle of Solway, and consequently became known to Henry VIII., who held him in high esteem. He was a vigorous upholder of the Protestant cause.

⁷⁹ Spottiswoode’s *History of the Church of Scotland*, Edin., 1851, 8vo, vol. i., p. 151.

⁸⁰ *Diurnal of Occurrents*, Maitland Club, p. 39.

trouble and needed comfort.” He added: “Perhaps the hand of God will cause them now to revere that Word which formerly, through fear of man, they lightly esteemed.”⁸¹

At Dundee, on his return, Wishart excited a deep interest. Those who remembered his words when the apostate Mill interrupted his preaching, hoped that the pestilence which had so closely followed his departure might be arrested on his return. He was urged to resume his public ministrations. But as those who attended the sick or exhibited symptoms of ailment were carefully avoided, there was difficulty in arranging matters. Wishart proposed to preach from the East Port, the sick and suspected being accommodated without, and those in health within the walls.⁸² The proposal was accepted, and the preacher discoursed from the 20th verse of the 107th Psalm: “He sent His Word and healed them.” He set forth the blessed nature of Holy Scripture, and the comfort which it brought to the bereaved. Afflictive dispensations, he remarked, conduced to humility and repentance. The Divine mercy, he said, was alike manifest in seasons of adversity and sickness, as in times of prosperity and health. Affliction was a great teacher, and God frequently removed His friends from troubles which were to come. The preacher enjoined a faithful attendance on the sick, and exhorted that prayer should accompany the means used for their recovery. The hearers were deeply moved, and retired with expressions of thankfulness.⁸³

At Dundee Wishart preached frequently, and also waited upon the sick. His proceedings were again reported to the cardinal, who now had recourse to an assassin. John Wighton, a priest belonging to Dundee, undertook to destroy the preacher. [26] Armed with a dagger, he entered the place of worship in which Wishart was discoursing, and concealing himself behind the pulpit, he waited his descent. Happily, Wishart remarked his presence, and before he had time to strike, seized him fast. “What would you do, my friend?” said the preacher, calmly. Dreading instant death, Wighton threw himself on his knees and entreated mercy. The congregation had retired, but a few persons who remained behind gave the alarm, and a crowd burst upon the scene. “Let us smite the traitor!” shouted a multitude of voices. Wishart remarked that he was unhurt, and begged that the aggressor might be spared. “He who touches him will trouble me,” he said earnestly. He then improved the occasion by pointing out the perils which attend the Christian in his pilgrimage; and after duly exhorting his intended murderer, he secured his retreat.⁸⁴

Wishart remained in Dundee till the pestilence had ceased. From Lords Cassilis and Glencairn he received letters intimating that a provincial Synod of the Church was to meet at Edinburgh on the 13th of January, and promising him a public audience on the occasion. He was pleased with this proposal, and agreeing to be at Edinburgh in January, he remarked that having “finished one battle he was ready for another.” Meanwhile he proceeded to Montrose, where he occasionally preached.

⁸¹ Knox’s *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 129.

⁸² At this time the town of Dundee was surrounded by a double wall, with ports or gates, which were removed about the end of the eighteenth century, except the East Gate, or Cowgate Port, which, out of respect to Wishart’s memory, has been preserved.

⁸³ Knox’s *Works*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 130.

⁸⁴ Knox’s *Works*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 131.

Having failed to silence the preacher by the dagger of the assassin, Beaton devised a stratagem for his arrest. At Montrose Wishart was waited upon by a jaded messenger, who thrust a letter into his hand. The letter bore that his friend John Kinnear of Kinnear, in Fife,⁸⁵ lay dangerously sick, and desired to see him at once. Moved by affection, Wishart mounted a led horse brought by the messenger, and in the company of a few friends he proceeded on his journey. Having passed the outskirts of the town, he remarked to his companions that he began to suspect treachery. [27] Some of his attendants riding forward discovered, at a retired and sheltered spot, a troop of about sixty horsemen, evidently waiting an arrival. The preacher and his friends returned to Montrose.⁸⁶

About the end of November, Wishart proposed to leave Montrose for Edinburgh. By his early friend, John Erskine of Dun, he was urged to remain in retirement, but he remarked that he could not break his promise. Having reached Dundee, he was conducted from there to Invergowrie, a hamlet in the vicinity, where he was entertained at the house of James Watson, one of his converts. Knox relates an anecdote in connection with this visit. The preacher rose during the night, and proceeding to a secluded portion of the garden, there expressed himself as if in pain, and afterwards knelt down and engaged in prayer. Two members of the household, who chanced to be awake, observed his procedure, and followed him unseen. Informing him next morning that they had remarked his vigil, they begged an explanation. He answered that he believed his life would be a short one. Knox regards this occurrence as evidence that the preacher was supernaturally informed of his approaching martyrdom. Such a view was not unnatural in times of superstition. But Wishart's act is easily explained. He evidently suffered from an imperfect circulation which, as in the case of the Scottish poet, Robert Burns, induced at night strong fever, or unnatural warmth. Tylney relates that at Cambridge he had "commonly by his bedside a tub of water in which, his people being in bed, the candle put out, and all quiet, he used to bathe himself." It was, doubtless, while suffering from a feverish attack to which he was subject, that he sought relief in the coolness of the garden. These attacks becoming probably more frequent and severe, led him to say to those who rashly questioned him, that he feared his life would not be prolonged.

From Invergowrie Wishart proceeded to Perth, then designated St. Johnstone. [28] He adopted this circuitous route to Edinburgh in order to avoid the nearer but more dangerous road through the eastern district of Fife, where the cardinal maintained a nearly absolute jurisdiction. Travelling from Perth by way of Kinross, he reached the ferry at Kinghorn, and from there crossed the Forth to Leith, the port of Edinburgh. It was the beginning of December, and he expected that the Earls of Cassilis and Glencairn would be in the capital awaiting his arrival. As they had not come, he was advised by friendly persons to remain in temporary concealment. He acquiesced, but soon complained of the restraint. "In what do I differ from one dead," he exclaimed, "except that I eat and drink? Up to now God has accepted my labours for the instruction of the ignorant and the exposure of error. Now I lurk in secret as one who is ashamed." Entreating that he might be permitted to resume his ministry, arrangements were made accordingly. On the second Sunday of December he preached at

⁸⁵ John Kynnear of Kynnear in the parish of Kilmany, Fifeshire, was, on the 30th of July 1543, served heir to his father, David Kynnear *de eodem*, in the lands and barony of Kynnear (Inq. Spec. Fife, No. 2).

⁸⁶ Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 132.

Leith, selecting as his subject the Parable of the Sower. The boldness of his teaching increased the alarm of his friends who, believing a report that the governor and the cardinal were to be in Edinburgh shortly, begged that he would leave so dangerous a vicinity.⁸⁷

At this period Wishart was introduced to three conspicuous opponents of the Romish Church, Alexander Crichton of Brunstone, Hugh Douglas of Longniddry, and John Cockburn of Ormiston. Subsequent to his public appearance at Leith, these persons entertained him at their houses, and instituted arrangements for his safety. Intimately associated with him, as they became during the last and most eventful period of his ministry, they severally claim particular notice. Crichton of Brunstone had up till then been a supporter of the Reformed cause, from hostility to Beaton rather than from any absolute conviction. His policy had been singularly vacillating. In 1539 he was, as one of his confidential friends, dispatched by Cardinal Beaton with letters to the court of Rome.

[29] Having quarrelled with the cardinal, he attached himself to Arran,⁸⁸ who employed him on diplomatic missions to France and England.⁸⁹ But renouncing the governor's favour, he made himself known to Sir Ralph Sadler, through whom he was recommended to the English court. The history of his negotiations with Henry VIII for the destruction of the cardinal will be detailed afterwards. But it is worthy of remark that subsequent to his intercourse with Wishart, his name no longer appears on the list of conspirators. His latter history may be related briefly. In 1548 he was forfeited and escaped from Scotland. He died before the 5th of December 1558, as on that day the process of forfeiture against him was reduced by the Scottish Parliament at the instance of John Crichton, who is described as "eldest lawful son and heir of umquhile Alexander Creichton of Brunstane."⁹⁰

Hugh Douglas of Longniddry was a man of firm principle and strong faith. A scion of the House of Douglas of Dalkeith, he was an early promoter of the Reformed doctrines. Under his roof, John Knox, after renouncing his priestly office at Haddington, obtained employment and shelter as tutor to his sons, Francis and George.⁹¹ Knox had resided with Douglas about eighteen months prior to Wishart's visit, and it is probable that his recommendation of the stranger tended towards his favourable reception by the Reformers of Haddingtonshire. Not much is known of the personal history of Hugh Douglas, apart from his support of Knox and Wishart. [30] His son, Francis Douglas of Longniddry, in a deed of ratification dated the 19th of April 1567, is named as third in the line of succession to James, Earl of Morton, failing his male issue.⁹² By Sir George Douglas, a descendant of the House, that portion of the lands of

⁸⁷ Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 134.

⁸⁸ Sadler's State Papers, pp. 25, 185, 280.

⁸⁹ On the 8th of November 1545, there was paid "by my Lord Gouemouis' special command to the Laird of Brounstoun in support of his expenses made in the time of his being in England, for labour and for redress of certain Scottish ships taken be the Englishmen, etc., 44 lib." (Treasurers' Accounts).

⁹⁰ Acta Parl. Scot., vol. ii., p. 520. [*umquhile: deceased.*]

⁹¹ John Knox was bom at Haddington and educated under the learned Mair at the University of Glasgow. In the protocol books of Haddington his name occurs in 1540, 1541, and 1542, under the style of "Schir John Knox," the designation of priests who had not attained the academical rank of master. A notarial instrument of assignment, dated 27th March 1543, bears his subscription as "Minister of the sacred altar and apostolic notary."

⁹² Acta Parl. Scot., vol. ii., p. 546.

Longniddry which belonged to his family, was sold in 1650 to the Earl of Winton, who also acquired the other portion. The estates of the Earl of Winton having been forfeited in 1715, were purchased by the York Building Company, by whom they were sold in 1779 to John Glassel, a surgeon, who acquired a fortune by trading in Virginia. His only child became Duchess of Argyll. By her son, the present Duke of Argyll, the lands of Longniddry were sold to the Earl of Wemyss, who guards with pious care an aged tree under which Knox preached. A circular mound covers the foundations of the ancient mansion.

John Cockburn of Ormiston, another upholder of Wishart's ministry, was descended from the ancient House of Cockburn of that ilk, and was hereditary Constable of Haddington. One of Knox's earlier converts, he remained through life his attached and earnest friend. Chiefly on account of the support which he extended to Wishart, he sustained severe persecution. By the Regent Arran and Archbishop Hamilton of St. Andrews, he was forfeited and banished in 1548; but he obtained his freedom by consenting to underlie the law. Knox, when detained in France, transmitted to his care Balnaves' "Treatise on Justification," which was found at Longniddry long afterwards.⁹³ In October 1559 he received at Berwick, from Sir Ralph Sadler and Sir James Crofts, £1000 sterling for the benefit of the poor who professed the Reformed faith; also, two hundred crowns (£63, 6s. 8d.) for his own use. He was deprived of the entire treasure by the Earl of Bothwell and his retainers on his homeward journey. Cockburn's wife, Alison, daughter of Sir James Sandilands of Calder, was also a zealous supporter of the Reformed doctrines.

Under the protection of these three landowners, [31] Wishart conducted Divine service in the parish church of Inveresk, near Musselburgh, both in the morning and afternoon of the Sunday succeeding that on which he had preached at Leith. In connection with these services, Knox relates two incidents. As the people assembled for worship, two friars from the chapel of Loretto, at Musselburgh,⁹⁴ stood at the entrance of the church and whispered to those who entered. Remarking their procedure, Wishart invited them to enter. "Come in," he said, "and you shall hear the Word of Truth, which, according as you receive it, will prove to you a savour of life or of death." The friars still lingered at the door; and as the preacher denounced idolatrous worship, they again sought to divert the attention of those who stood near. Turning towards the scoffers, he exclaimed, "How long will you dare to deceive men's souls? You reject the truth yourselves, and would prevent others from embracing it. God will surely expose your hypocrisy and confound your malice."⁹⁵

The other incident was of a more hopeful character. At the close of the afternoon's service, Sir George Douglas, brother of the Earl of Angus, stood up and, in the hearing of the

⁹³ *Three Scottish Reformers*, Edin., 1874, p. 20.

⁹⁴ Knox describes the loungers as two Grey Friars. The members of the chapel of Loretto were so designated, though not strictly entitled to the appellation. The chapel at Loretto, or Alareit, near Musselburgh, was founded in 1533 by Thomas Douchtie, and dedicated by him to the Virgin. Within the building, Douchtie and his successors professed to work miracles. In 1536, James V made a pilgrimage to the chapel from Stirling, after being driven back by a storm on his first voyage to France to bring home his queen. A political pasquinade, at the expense of Douchtie and his brethren, the Grey Friars, was composed by Alexander Cunningham, fifth Earl of Glencairn. In this composition he names a Friar Laing, who probably was one of those associated with the incident at Inveresk (*Three Scottish Reformers*, pp. 12-16).

⁹⁵ Knox's *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 135.

congregation, said, "I know that my Lord Governor and the cardinal will hear that I have been present at these services. I shall make no denial, and I will fearlessly defend the preacher and uphold his doctrines." ⁹⁶

[32]

As the governor and cardinal were now in Edinburgh, only a few miles distant, Wishart was, for greater safety, conducted to the mansion of Longniddry. There he had an opportunity to commune with Knox, who deeply interested in his missionary labours, became his companion from place to place, armed with a two-handed sword.⁹⁷

The mansion of Longniddry was situated in the parish of Gladsmuir, within four miles of the considerable village of Tranent. At Tranent Wishart preached to large assemblies on two consecutive Sundays. Attended by Knox, he proceeded to the town of Haddington on the 14th of January 1545-6. There he was entertained by David Forrest, a respectable burgess who had embraced the Reformed doctrines. In dread of persecution, Forrest afterwards sought shelter in England.⁹⁸ He was nominated by the General Assembly of December 1560, as one "apt and able to minister;" but though the request that he would enter the ministry was more than once renewed, he preferred to remain a layman. Latterly he was appointed General of the Mint. ⁹⁹

Wishart preached at Haddington two days in succession. Knox expected he would have large audiences, but was disappointed. At the first morning service a considerable number were present, but at the afternoon service, and the morning service of the second day, the attendance was "slender." The people, it was found, were unwilling to offend the Earl of Bothwell, who held lands in the neighbourhood, and was known to be in alliance with the cardinal. At the close of the first day's service, Wishart was entertained at the seat of Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington, father of William Maitland, the well-known statesman. Sir Richard was an industrious scholar, and without committing himself to the new opinions, was favourable to inquiry.¹⁰⁰ [33] On the second morning, as he was making preparations for service, Wishart received a letter from the Lords Cassilis and Glencairn, intimating that they were unable to meet him at Edinburgh. Apprehending that they had become indifferent to the Reformed cause, he was deeply moved, and remarked that, "he was weary of the world since men were weary of God." Unable to afford him any substantial comfort, Knox begged that he would not disqualify himself for present duties.

⁹⁶ Sir George Douglas of Pittendreich was an especial favourite of Henry VIII. In his society, when acting as one of the Scottish Commissioners, Wishart returned to Scotland. Appointed a Privy Councillor in March 1543. he was forfeited by the Catholic party for alleged treason, but was assoilzied (absolved) in December 1544. He was constituted an Extraordinary Lord of Session in 1549. David, his eldest son, became seventh Earl of Angus; and his second son, James, was Earl of Morton and Regent of Scotland (Hay's *Senators of the College of Justice*, Edin., 1832, p. 94).

⁹⁷ Knox's *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 136.

⁹⁸ Sadler's *Letters*, vol. i., p. 585.

⁹⁹ Knox's *Works*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 563, note by Mr. David Laing.

¹⁰⁰ Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington held office under James V, Mary of Guise, Queen Mary, and James VI. He was knighted in 1551 on being appointed an Extraordinary Lord of Session. His "Collection of Early Scottish Poetry" is a work of great value. Poems of his own composition are printed by the Maitland Club. He died on the 20th of March 1586 at the age of ninety.

After walking about half-an-hour before the high altar, Wishart ascended the pulpit. Perceiving that few were present, he said,

“Lord, how long shall it be that Thy healing Word shall be despised, and men shall not regard their own salvation? I have heard of thee, O Haddington! that thou would’st send to the foolish Clerk Plays two or three thousand persons; but of those in thy town and parish, not one hundred will assemble to hear the message of the eternal God.”

After some severe and pointed warnings, he proceeded with an exposition of the Second Table of the Law, and an exhortation to patience.¹⁰¹ It had been arranged that Wishart should, in the evening, repair to Ormiston, the seat of his friend Cockburn. Before leaving Haddington, he had a solemn parting with Douglas of Longniddry, and John Knox. As Knox expressed a desire to continue as his attendant, he strictly forbade him. Relieving him of his two-handed sword, he said to him, “Return to your bairns,¹⁰² and God bless you: one is sufficient for a sacrifice.” The Reformers did not again meet. In his journey to Ormiston, Wishart was accompanied by John Cockburn, his host; John Sandilands, younger of Calder, Cockburn’s brother-in-law;¹⁰³ and Crichton of Brunstone.¹⁰⁴ [34] Having reached Onniston, the friends supped together; and thereafter Wishart discoursed respecting the death of God’s chosen servants, concluding the evening’s devotions by singing a metrical version of the 51st Psalm.¹⁰⁵ Wishing his friends refreshing rest, he retired to his apartment.

The Provincial Synod met at Edinburgh on the 13th of January, but Beaton at once adjourned it till after Easter, promising to those assembled, that in the interval he would put to silence a heretic who was giving him much concern by disturbing the Church. Obtaining the co-operation of the Earl of Bothwell, as Sheriff of Haddingtonshire, he accompanied that nobleman to Elphinstone Tower at the head of five hundred men.¹⁰⁶ The preacher’s arrival at Ormiston being duly reported, Bothwell resolved to gratify the cardinal by effecting his capture. At midnight the house of Ormiston was surrounded by troops, while Cockburn and his guests were summoned to a surrender. To Cockburn, Bothwell volunteered the promise that should Wishart be delivered into his hands, he would become personal surety for his safety, even against the power of the cardinal himself.

Informed that he was sought for, Wishart said meekly, “Let the will of the Lord be done.” He addressed Bothwell in these words: “I thank God that one so honourable as your lordship

¹⁰¹ Knox’s *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., pp. 136-138.

¹⁰² Children or pupils.

¹⁰³ John Sandilands was elder of the two sons of Sir James Sandilands of Calder. His younger brother was created Lord Torphichen. Knox resided in Calder House after his return to Scotland in 1555.

¹⁰⁴ Knox relates that on account of the keen frost, and the imperfect condition of the roads, the journey from Haddington to Ormiston was performed on foot. The distance was about six miles.

¹⁰⁵ Knox quotes the two opening lines:

“Have mercy on me now, good Lord,
After thy great mercy,” etc.

A paraphrase of the psalm commencing with these lines is contained in the “Gude and Godlie Ballates,” edited or composed by John and Robert Wedderburn, who were living at Dundee about the year 1540.

¹⁰⁶ *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 41.

receives me this night, being assured that, [35] having pledged your honour, you will preserve me from injury without order of law. The law, I am not ignorant, is corrupt, and is used as a cloak under which to shed blood; but I less fear to die openly than to be slain in secret.”

“Not only,” replied Bothwell, “shall I protect you from secret violence, but I shall shelter you from the designs both of the governor and cardinal. In my keeping you shall be secure till I restore you to freedom or bring you again to this place.” Accepting this engagement, Cockburn offered the earl his bond of manrent ¹⁰⁷ in token of service.

Bothwell bore Wishart to Elphinstone Tower. Having secured so important a prisoner, the cardinal dispatched to Ormiston James Hamilton of Stonehouse, Captain of Edinburgh Castle, to arrest the persons of John Cockburn, John Sandilands, and Crichton of Brunstone. Cockburn and Sandilands invited Hamilton and his followers to refreshment, and in the interval Crichton contrived to escape. Of the prisoners of the night, Wishart was confined in Elphinstone Tower, and Cockburn and Sandilands were sent to Edinburgh Castle.¹⁰⁸

Ormiston House, where Wishart was captured, and which he is believed to have visited in the course of his previous ministrations, is now a ruin. Of the structure, only a gable wall and some vaults remain. Adjoining the gable is a flower-garden, containing a venerable yew under which Wishart is said to have preached. The yew is of a remarkable size, the stem extending to a girth of seventeen feet and reaching a height of thirty-three. Within the adjoining chapel a monumental brass commemorates Alexander, eldest son of John Cockburn, Wishart’s host — a favourite pupil of Knox. A youth of high promise, he died in August 1564, at the age of twenty-nine. His epitaph, composed by Buchanan, proceeds thus:

[36]

“Omnia qua: longa indulget mortalibus aetas,
Haec tibi Alexander, prima juventa dedit,
Cum genere et forma generoso sanguine digna;
Ingenium velox, ingenuumque animum.
Excoluit virtus animum, ingeniumque camenae
Successu studio consilioque pari;
His ducibus primum peragrata Britannia deinde;
Gallia ad armiferos qua patet Helvetios;
Doctus ibi linguas quas Roma, Sion, et Athenae,
Quas cum Germano Gallia docta sonat
Te licet in prima rapuerunt fata juventa:
Non immaturo funere raptus obis,
Omnibus officiis vitae qui functus obivit
Non fas hunc vitas est de brevitare queri.
Hic conditur M^r Alexander Cockburn
primogenitus Joannis domini Ormiston
et Alisonae Sandilands, ex preclara
familia Calder, qui natus 13 Januarii 1535

¹⁰⁷ *Manrent*: a Scottish feudal agreement of friendship and assistance in exchange for protection.

¹⁰⁸ Knox’s *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i, pp. 141, 142.

Post insignem linguarum professionem;
Obiit anno astatu suae 28 calen. Sept^t.”¹⁰⁹

Sir John Cockburn, a younger brother of Knox’s pupil, became a Lord of Session, and died in 1623. Other representatives of the family were distinguished as lawyers and statesmen. The barony of Ormiston now belongs to the Earl of Hopetoun.

John Sandilands was liberated from his confinement in Edinburgh Castle, on granting the cardinal his bond of manrent.¹¹⁰ Cockburn escaped by scaling the wall. In the Treasurer’s book it appears that, on the 10th of March 1546, John Paterson, pursuivant, received a fee of ten shillings for arresting “the gudes” (goods) of the Laird of Ormiston, and summoning him “to underly the law” at Edinburgh on the 13th of April, “for resetting Master George Wishart, he being at the home;” also “for breaking from the ward within the castle of Edinburgh.”

As an important prisoner, Wishart was strictly guarded. Elphinstone Tower, his first prison, still remains a memorial of feudal dignity and ecclesiastical oppression alike. An oblong square keep, fifty-nine feet in length, it rises to a height of about eighty feet. The walls are from seven to twelve feet thick, and the several floors are supported on powerful arches. In the basement are the kitchen and servants’ hall — [37] the baron’s hall occupies the second floor, and the third contains two large sleeping-apartments and other chambers. Passages are constructed within the walls, to which light is admitted by arrow-slit windows. This keep was reared in the thirteenth century by John de Elphinstone, who owned the adjoining lands. In Wishart’s time it belonged to a descendant of Johnstone of that ilk. John Ker, minister of Prestonpans, and stepson of John Knox, married a daughter of John Johnstone of Elphinstone. After several changes, the tower and lands were acquired by an ancestor of the present Baron Elphinstone. Wishart was immured in a narrow chamber on the basement floor. His first jailer, Patrick, Earl of Bothwell, was only less cruel, crafty, and unscrupulous

¹⁰⁹ “All that: long age indulges mortals,
These Alexander, the first youth, gave you,
With lineage and form worthy of noble blood;
A quick wit, and a noble spirit.
Virtue cultivated the mind, and the genius of the camenes
With equal success, study and counsel;
With these leaders first traversed Britain, then;
France to the arms-bearers where the Helvetians are open;
Learned there the languages that Rome, Sion, and Athens,
Which with the German Gaul sounds learned
Although the fates snatched you away in your prime youth:
You do not die snatched away by an untimely funeral,
Who died having fulfilled all the duties of life
It is not right to complain of the shortness of his life.
Here is buried Mr. Alexander Cockburn
the eldest son of John Lord Ormiston
and Alison Sandilands, of the illustrious
family of Calder, who was born 13 January 1535
After a distinguished profession of languages;
He died in the year of his death 28th of September.”

¹¹⁰ Knox’s *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., p. 142.

than his more notorious son, the murderer of Darnley.¹¹¹ Succeeding to the earldom in early life, he proved so obnoxious to public order, that James V, after twice subjecting him to imprisonment, deprived him of his lands in Liddesdale, and banished him from the kingdom. In England, he engaged in treasonable negotiations with Henry VIII. Returning to Scotland on the death of James V, he attached himself to Beaton. Sir Ralph Sadler, in May 1543, describes him as “the most vain and insolent man in the world, full of pride and folly.”¹¹² Imprisoned for disorderly practices, he was liberated after the battle of Pinkie, in September 1547. He latterly obtained shelter at the court of Edward VI, and in 1556 closed in exile a life of shame.

Bothwell’s promise to protect his prisoner from the vengeance of his adversaries was soon exchanged for another of a very opposite character. Wishart was made prisoner on the 16th of January,¹¹³ and on the 19th of the same month, Bothwell, at a meeting of the Privy Council, pledged himself to deliver his prisoner to the order of the governor. The proceedings of the council are recorded in these words:

[38]

“Apud Edinburgh presente domino gubernatore xix^o Januarii anno Domini millesimo v^c xlv^{to} - Sederunt Cardinalis cancellarius, Episcopus Candide Case, Comes Bothuel — Abbates paslay culros, dominus Borfhuik, Clericus Registri.”¹¹⁴

“The aforesaid day, in the presence of my Lord Governor and Lords of Counsel, came Patrick Earl Bothwell — and he bound and obliged him to deliver Master George Wishart to my Lord Governor or any others in his behalf, whom he will depute to reserve him between this and the penultimate day of January instant inclusive, and shall keep surely and answer for him in the interim under all the highest pain and charge that he may incur if he fails in this.”¹¹⁵

Bothwell halted between his two promises in a manner befitting his unstable and treacherous character. He conveyed his prisoner to Edinburgh; then, as if unwilling to violate his engagement, he brought him back to Haddingtonshire, and placed him in his castle of Hailes.¹¹⁶ There he proposed to hold him fast. But the queen regent promised to renew her favour, which had been withdrawn, and the cardinal offered money if he would place his prisoner in Edinburgh Castle. Bothwell at length complied.¹¹⁷ At Edinburgh Castle, Wishart was kept a few days only. With the governor’s sanction, he was removed by the cardinal to his castle of St. Andrews, and there confined in the sea-tower. This terrible memorial of priestly tyranny remains entire. Situated at the north-west corner of the spacious quadrangle which

¹¹¹ [The murder of Henry Stuart \(Lord Darnley\), the 2nd husband of Mary, Queen of Scots, remains an unsolved mystery. But suspicion fell on the Queen, and on the Earl of Bothwell, who was later acquitted of the crime.](#)

¹¹² Sadler’s State Papers, vol. i., p. 184.

¹¹³ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 41.

¹¹⁴ [Transl.: At Edinburgh, in the presence of the Lord Governor, on the 19th of January in the year of our Lord 1450 - sat the Cardinal Chancellor, Bishop Candide Case, Earl of Bothuel, Abbots of Paslay, Lord Borfhuik, Clerk of the Register.](#)

¹¹⁵ Reg. Sec. Cone, fol. 25.

¹¹⁶ Hailes Castle occupies a retired spot on the banks of the Tyne, in the parish of Prestonkirk. It is now a ruin.

¹¹⁷ Knox’s *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 143.

was enclosed by the other buildings of the stronghold, the walls of the sea-tower are of enormous thickness. Within is an arched chamber, about thirteen feet square. From the centre, pierced in the solid rock, a circular vault descends to a depth of twenty-seven feet — the upper diameter being seven, and the lower seventeen feet. In this loathsome pit were confined those who dared to oppose the canon law or resist the authority of the Church. Here John Roger, a black friar, was immured (imprisoned) before his secret murder in 1544; [39] and here George Wishart languished four weeks. Closely identified with the preacher's last days, the castle of St. Andrews claims further notice. Reared in 1200 by Roger, Bishop of St. Andrews, as his episcopal residence, it frequently changed hands during the War of Independence. Within it, James I received his early education from Bishop Wardlaw; James II took counsel with the ingenious Bishop Kennedy; and James III is supposed to have been born. During the primacy of Cardinal Beaton, the castle was fitted to endure a siege.

Though Wishart was a prisoner in his castle, the cardinal encountered some difficulties in effecting his death. Friar John Roger had been secretly removed from the dungeon, and thrust headlong from the rock.¹¹⁸ But George Wishart, as the scion of an ancient house, and an associate of several of the nobility, might not be summarily disposed of. The Church might condemn, but a fatal sentence could only be carried out on the authority of the governor. So Beaton applied to the governor, desiring him to appoint a commission, with a criminal judge, to conduct the business of the trial. Unwilling to offend his powerful rival, Arran ¹¹⁹ would have granted this request, but for the vigorous remonstrance of Sir David Hamilton of Preston ([his maternal grandfather](#)), who pointed to the cardinal's ambition, and the unwarrantable character of his demand. Arran accordingly refused the commission, and expressed his desire that in the meantime all proceedings should be stopped.¹²⁰

The cardinal had to encounter another difficulty. He well knew that Gavin Dunbar, the Archbishop of Glasgow, regarded him with dislike, the consequent of an extraordinary quarrel which had occurred between them eight months before. The circumstances of this dispute are peculiarly illustrative of that spirit of intolerance in Scottish churchmen which, with other errors, George Wishart condemned in his prelections ¹²¹ and by his example. The cardinal happened to be in Glasgow when, on the 4th of June 1545, [40] the Sieur Gabriel de Montgomery ¹²² arrived from France with auxiliary troops. In honour of the occasion, a solemn procession was arranged in the cathedral church. As cardinal, *legatus natus*,¹²³ and primate, Beaton asserted the right of precedence, while Dunbar argued that as archbishop of

¹¹⁸ Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 119.

¹¹⁹ James Hamilton, 2nd Earl of Arran, served as Regent of Scotland from 1543 to 1554 during the minority of Mary, Queen of Scots. That is, he served as the monarch in her stead; and he was a Protestant.

¹²⁰ Lindsay of Pittscoatie's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1727, folio, p. 188.

¹²¹ *Prelections*: public lectures or discourses delivered in a formal academic setting.

¹²² James Montgomery de Lorges succeeded, in 1545, John Stuart, Count D'Aubigny, as captain of the Scottish guard in France. He died in 1560. Gabriel, his eldest son, mentioned in the text, obtained a painful notoriety from having mortally wounded in a tournament Henry II. of France, in June 1559. He retired to Normandy, and afterwards visited Italy and England. Subsequent to 1562 he acted as a commander of the Protestant party in the religious wars of France. He narrowly escaped destruction at the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and two years later, having invaded Normandy, he was taken prisoner, and executed on the 27th May 1574.

¹²³ *Legate natus*: "born legate"; a prelate who holds permanent legatine authority by virtue of his office (not appt'd).

the diocese, *he* was entitled to the priority. The quarrel was taken up by the cross-bearers of the rival prelates who, at the door of the choir, engaged in open conflict. Both crosses were thrown down and the vestments of the belligerents were torn and scattered. This quarrel between the cardinal and the archbishop was, according to Knox, “judged mortal and without any hope of reconciliation.”¹²⁴

Had Archbishop Dunbar refused to attend the proposed convention at St. Andrews, the cardinal might have failed to effect his purpose. He was, however, keenly desirous of upholding the Church by the destruction of heretics. And so, laying aside private feeling, he consented to take part in the approaching trial.

The bishops were invited by the cardinal to meet in his cathedral on the 28th of February. The day before, John Winram, the sub-prior, visited the prisoner and summoned him to his trial. “It is,” said the preacher, “useless for the cardinal to summon one to attend his court who is wholly in his power. But observe your forms.”

On the morning of the trial, the bishops were ushered into the cathedral by the cardinal’s retainers. An armed party fetched the prisoner, who on entering the gate of the cathedral, threw his purse to a beggar, remarking that it would no longer be useful to himself. A discourse preached by Winram opened the proceedings.

[41] In selecting Winram to preach, Beaton acted with his usual policy. A churchman of considerable rank and known ability, Winram was suspected of tolerating the new opinions. By being called on publicly to denounce them, the cardinal imagined that, out of respect to his own consistency, he would feel bound to conform to the ancient doctrines. Winram probably suspected the snare, and so he did not fall into it. Choosing as his subject the Parable of the Sower, he described the Word of God as the good seed, and characterised heresy as the evil seed. Heresy consisted, he said, of opinions obstinately maintained which impugned the authority of Scripture. It was manifested on the part of those who had the care of souls, by wilful ignorance or neglect of the pastoral duties. A spiritual teacher ought to thoroughly understand that Word which he professed to explain to others. In the words of St. Paul, “a bishop must be blameless, as the minister of God, not stubborn, not soon angry, not given to wine, no fighter, not given to filthy lucre, but a dispenser of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the word of doctrine, that he may be able to exhort with wholesome learning, and to convince those who contradict.”¹²⁵ As the goldsmith had a test for the true metal, so the test of heresy was Holy Scripture. Respecting the punishment of heresy in this life, he read in the parable, “Let both grow together until the harvest.”¹²⁶ Nevertheless, persistent opposition to the truth might be punished by the secular arm.

This discourse might have been addressed to any Protestant assembly. It certainly did not commit the preacher to an approval of the cardinal’s proceedings. At the Reformation in 1560, Winram joined the Protestant party, and became associated with Knox and others in preparing the *Confession of Faith* and the *First Book of Discipline*.

¹²⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 39; Knox’s *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., pp. 143-147.

¹²⁵ Titus 1.7.

¹²⁶ Matt. 13.30.

At the close of Winram's discourse, Wishart was invited to ascend the pulpit, there to answer the articles of accusation. [42] John Lauder,¹²⁷ a priest and member of the Priory, stood forward as accuser. Reading the articles of indictment with unbecoming haste,¹²⁸ he demanded from the prisoner an immediate answer. After on his knees engaging in solemn prayer, Wishart rose, and said, "Words abominable even to conceive have been ascribed to me, therefore hear and know my doctrine: Since my return from England, I have taught the Ten Commandments, the Twelve Articles of Faith, and the Lord's Prayer. In Dundee I expounded St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans; and the manner of my teaching I shall presently explain."

"Renegade, traitor, and thief!" exclaimed Lauder, "You have been a preacher too long, and have exercised your function without authority"

The bishops having concurred, Wishart expressed a desire that he might be tried by the governor.

"The cardinal is a judge, more than sufficient for you," said Lauder. "Is not my Lord Cardinal Chancellor of Scotland, Archbishop of St. Andrews, Bishop of Mirepois, Commendator of Arbroath, *legatus natus*, and *legatus a latere*?"¹²⁹ — "I do not depise my Lord Cardinal," rejoined the preacher, "but I desire to be tried by the requirements of Holy Scripture, under the authority of the governor, whose prisoner I am."

"Such man, such judge," exclaimed the bystanders, while the cardinal proposed to pronounce sentence. On further consideration, it was ruled that, to better justify the proceedings, the charges should be read a second time, and the prisoner questioned upon each.

"Renegade, traitor, and thief," proceeded Lauder, "you have deceived the people, and despised Holy Church, and the authority of the governor. Prohibited from preaching in Dundee, you continued. [43] So when the Bishop of Brechin cursed you, delivered you to the devil, and commanded you to cease preaching, you obstinately disobeyed." — "I read in Holy Scripture," answered Wishart, "that we ought to obey God rather than man."

"False heretic, you said that a priest at the altar saying mass was as a fox in summer wagging his tail." — "The external motion of the body," replied the preacher, "without grace in the heart, is like the play of a monkey. God searches the heart, and those who truly worship Him must worship Him in sincerity. Such is my teaching."

"You have falsely taught that there are not seven sacraments," said Lauder. — "I believe," replied Wishart, "in those sacraments alone which were instituted by Christ, and are set forth in the Holy Gospel."

"You have denied the Sacrament of Confession, affirming that men ought to confess sin to God, and not to the priest." — "I teach, my lord," said Wishart, "that priestly confession has

¹²⁷ John Lauder studied at St. Andrews. His name appears among the licentiates in Pedagogio, anno 1508. It appears from the Treasurer's Accounts that he was frequently employed in ecclesiastical affairs.

¹²⁸ That Lauder spit in the prisoner's face, as is stated by Knox, may not be credited. Such an indecency would not have been tolerated either by the bishops or the spectators (Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 152).

¹²⁹ *Legatus a latere*: "legate from the side;" a papal legate appointed by the Pope for special missions.

no warrant, but that confession to God is blessed. In the 51st Psalm, David makes confession to God, saying, ‘Against You, You only, have I sinned.’ When St. James writes, ‘Confess your faults one to another,’¹³⁰ he counsels us against being high-minded, and so to acknowledge our sinfulness before all. The Grey Friars, who say they are already pure, do not do this.”

The bishops expressed a strong dissent, while Lauder proceeded to read the fifth article:

“False heretic, you affirmed that it was essential that man should understand the nature of baptism.” — “My lord,” said Wishart, “none of you would transact business with one to whose language you were a stranger. So the parent should understand what in baptism he undertakes for his child.”

“You have the spirit of error!” exclaimed a chaplain of the cardinal. Lauder went on:

“False heretic, traitor, and thief, you set forth that the sacrifice of the altar was but a piece of bread, and the consecration of the Eucharist a rite of superstition.” [44] — “Sailing on the Rhine,” replied the preacher, “I met a Jew with whom I reasoned respecting his religion. ‘Messiah, when He comes, will not abrogate the law as you do,’ said the Jew; ‘we support our poor, you allow your needy to perish; we forbid the worship of images, your churches are full of idols; and you adore a piece of bread, saying it is your God.’ This incident I have related in my public teaching.”

“Read the next article,” interrupted the cardinal.

“False heretic, you affirmed that extreme unction was not a sacrament.” — “I did not refer to extreme unction in my teaching,” was the preacher’s reply.

“False heretic, you denied the efficacy of holy water, and impugned the cursing of Holy Church.” — “I never estimated the strength of holy water,” said Wishart; “and I cannot commend exorcism or cursing while such things have no warrant in the Holy Scripture.”

“False renegade,” proceeded Lauder, “you have denied the power of the Pope, and maintained that every layman is a priest.” — “On the authority of the Word,” replied the prisoner, “I taught that believers are ‘a holy priesthood,’¹³¹ and that those ignorant of the Scriptures, whatever their rank or degree, cannot instruct others; without the key of knowledge, they cannot bind or loose.”

The bishops smiled derisively, while Lauder proceeded with the indictment.

“False heretic, you have denied the freedom of the will, and taught that man of himself cannot do either good or evil.” — “Not so,” answered the prisoner. “I teach in the words of Holy Scripture: ‘Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin;’ and, ‘If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’”¹³²

“False heretic,” said Lauder, reading the eleventh article,

¹³⁰ James 5.16.

¹³¹ 1Peter 2.9.

¹³² John 8.34, 36.

“You have said that it is lawful to eat flesh on Friday.” — “In the writings of St. Paul I read,” replied Wishart, “‘Unto the pure, all things are pure, but unto those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure.’ [45] Through the Word the faithful man sanctifies God’s creatures: the creature may not sanctify that which is corrupt.”

“That is blasphemy,” said the bishops.

“You have taught, false heretic,” continued the accuser, “that men should pray to God only, and not to the saints. Answer, yes or no.” — “The first commandment,” replied Wishart, “teaches me to worship God only; and as St. Paul writes, there is only ‘one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.’¹³³ He is the door by which we must enter in. He who does not enter by this door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.¹³⁴ Concerning the saints, we are not taught to pray to them, and it is not certain that they will hear us.”

“False heretic, you say there is no purgatory.” — “In the Scriptures,” replied the preacher, “such a place is not named.”

“You have falsely contemned the prayers of monks and friars, and taught that priests may marry, and have wives.” — “I read in St. Matthew’s Gospel,” was the Reformer’s reply, “that those who abstain from marriage for the kingdom of heaven’s sake are blessed of God.¹³⁵ Those who do not have the gift of chastity, and yet have become celebrates, you know have erred greatly.”

“Renegade and heretic, you have refused to obey our general and provincial councils.” — “Should your councils teach according to the Word of God, I will obey them,” was the answer.

“Proceed with the articles,” shouted John Scot of the Greyfriars’ monastery.

“You have taught that God does not dwell in churches built by men’s hands, and that it is vain to consecrate costly edifices to His praise.” — “God,” replied Wishart, “is present everywhere. ‘Behold,’ said Solomon, ‘heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this house which I have built.’¹³⁶ In the Book of Job, God is described as ‘high as heaven: deeper than hell. [46] His measure longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.’¹³⁷ Yet God is pleased to honour places specially dedicated to His worship: ‘Where two or three,’ said the Saviour, ‘are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.’¹³⁸ God is certainly present where He is truly worshipped.”

“You have, false heretic, averred that men should not fast.” — “Fasting,” replied the prisoner, “is commended in Scripture; and I have learned by experience that fasting is beneficial to the body. God honours those only who truly fast.”

¹³³ 1Tim. 2.5.

¹³⁴ John 10.1.

¹³⁵ Matt. 19.12.

¹³⁶ 2Chron. 6.18.

¹³⁷ Job 11.8, 9.

¹³⁸ Matt. 18.20.

“False heretic, You have said that the souls of men sleep until the Day of Judgment.” — “God forgive those who so report me,” replied Wishart. “The soul of the believer does not sleep, but at once enters into glory.”

As the preacher closed, the bishops returned a verdict of “guilty.” Wishart, on his knees, expressed these words of prayer: “Gracious and everlasting God, how long will You permit your servants to suffer through infatuation and ignorance? We know that the righteous must suffer persecution in this life, which passes like a shadow; yet we would entreat You, merciful Father, that You would defend Your people whom You have chosen, and give them grace to endure and continue in Your Holy Word.”

Having commanded the laity to retire, the cardinal sentenced the prisoner to be burned to ashes. Wishart was conducted to his prison by the captain of the castle and his warders. There he was visited by two monks from the Greyfriars’ monastery, John Scot and another, who offered to act as his confessors. He declined their offer, but expressed a desire that the sub-prior might be sent to him. Winram joined him at once; but the subject of their conversation did not transpire.

The execution was fixed for the 1st of March, the day after the trial. A stake was erected in the centre of an open space fronting the principal entrance to the castle. [47] The main tower, the several turrets, and front windows were decorated with silk hangings and tapestry; and the prisoner’s escape was rendered impossible by the heavy artillery of the fortress being pointed towards the scene of execution.

From the front windows of the castle, the cardinal and bishops reclined on splendid cushions. The cardinal’s military guard, bearing insignia, encircled the stake. As the trumpeters sounded, two executioners proceeded to fetch the prisoner. They arrayed him in a vestment of black linen, and hung bags of gunpowder around his person; then they conducted him to the place of death.

“Pray to our Lady, Master George,” exclaimed two friars, as the prisoner crossed the drawbridge. “Tempt me not, my brethren,” replied the preacher.

At the stake, Wishart fell upon his knees, and exclaimed aloud: “Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me. Heavenly Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.” Turning to the multitude, he said: “Christian brethren and sisters, be not offended at the Word of God on account of the tortures you see prepared for me. Love the Word which publishes salvation, and suffer patiently for the Gospel’s sake. [48] To my brethren and sisters who have heard me elsewhere, declare that my doctrine is no old wife’s fables, but the blessed Gospel of salvation. For preaching that Gospel, I am now to suffer, and I suffer gladly for the Redeemer’s sake. Should any of you be called on to endure persecution, do not fear those who can destroy the body, for they cannot slay the soul. Most falsely I have been accused of teaching that the soul will sleep after death till the last day; I believe my soul shall sup with my Saviour this night.”

After a pause, he said, “I beseech you, brethren and sisters, exhort your prelates to acquaint themselves with the Word of God, so that they may be ashamed to do evil and learn to do good; for if they will not turn from their sinful way, the wrath of God shall fall upon them suddenly, and they shall not escape.” Again falling on his knees, he prayed for those who had, through ignorance, condemned him, and for all who had testified against him falsely. One of

the executioners, who entreated his forgiveness, he kissed on the cheek, saying to him, “By this token I forgive you; do your office.” Wishart was now made fast to the stake, while a heap of faggots was piled around his body. Fire being applied, the bags of gunpowder attached to his person exploded, and he ceased to live.¹³⁹

Deeply moved, the multitude retired from the scene of death. A religion which required such sacrifices could not long retain general acceptance. But the cardinal was indifferent to public sentiment. Early in April, at Finhaven in Forfarshire, he attended the marriage of his illegitimate daughter, Margaret, with David Lindsay, afterwards Earl of Crawford. One of the charges on which Wishart was condemned, was that he opposed the celibacy of the clergy. But while the cardinal held those who opposed priestly celibacy to be worthy of death, he personally ignored its obligations. For many years he cohabited with Marion Ogilvy, a daughter of Lord Ogilvy of Airlie, by whom he was father of two sons and a daughter, Margaret.¹⁴⁰ In a contract of marriage which he subscribed at St. Andrews on the 10th of April 1546, he names Margaret Beaton as his daughter, and as such he provided her with a dowry of four thousand merks.¹⁴¹

[49] The account we have presented of Wishart’s trial and martyrdom is derived from the narrative of Foxe the martyrologist, in the first edition of his “Acts and Monuments,” printed in 1563. The original of that narrative is contained in a black-letter volume,¹⁴² printed at London by John Day and William Seres, with the title, “The tragic death of David Beaton, Bishop of Saint Andrews in Scotland, to which is joined the martyrdom of master George Wishart, gentleman, for whose sake the aforesaid bishop was not long after slain. In which you may learn what a burning charity they showed not only towards him: but to those who came to their graves for the blessed Gospel’s sake.” The volume is without a date, but the “Tragedy of Beaton” contained in it was composed by Sir David Lindsay about a year after the cardinal’s death. And it is not improbable that the account of Wishart, by which it is accompanied, was prepared by Knox when he resided in the Castle of St. Andrews, between April and July 1547. Whether this opinion is well founded or not, Knox has, by including in his “History” the narrative of the martyr’s trial and death contained in the black-letter volume, substantially verified its details.

In the reprint of Foxe’s “Acts and Monuments,” which appeared in 1570, on the margin opposite to Wishart’s allusion to the bishops, are these words: “M. George Wishart prophesies of the death of the cardinal, which followed after.” Proceeding on this unwarrantable deduction, George Buchanan, in his “History of Scotland,” asserts that, at the stake, Wishart actually predicted the cardinal’s death. Adopting his uncle’s statement, David Buchanan, in his edition of Knox’s “History,”¹⁴³ adds that Wishart at the stake, “looking towards the cardinal, said he who in such state from that high place feeds his eyes with my torments, [50]

¹³⁹ [Wishart was about 33 years of age at his death \(~1513-1546\).](#)

¹⁴⁰ Knox’s *History*, ed. 1846, p. 174, note by Mr. David Laing.

¹⁴¹ Lord Lindsay’s *Lives of the Lindsays*, London, 1858, 8vo, vol. i., p. 201. [Merks: two-thirds of a pound Scots.](#)

¹⁴² A unique copy of this volume belonged to the late Mr. Richard Heber.

¹⁴³ Knox’s *History*, edited by David Buchanan, Lond., 1644, p. 171.

within few days shall be hanged out at the same window, to be seen with as much ignominy, as he now leans there in pride.”

Other erroneous statements in connection with Wishart’s execution may be related, since they have unhappily been adopted by more than one historian, and are generally believed. Lindsay of Pitscottie, an extremely credulous writer, remarks that,¹⁴⁴ “Wishart informed the captain of the castle that he saw a great fire upon the sea, which, moving to and fro, at length came upon the city of St. Andrews, and lighting upon the earth, broke asunder, which, he thought, portended the wrath of God to seize shortly not only on that wicked man who was lord of that castle, but also upon the city.” George Buchanan ¹⁴⁵ relates that the sub-prior, on being admitted to Wishart’s presence, asked him whether he would receive the Holy Communion, when he answered that he would, provided it was dispensed in both the elements. Having communicated to the cardinal the prisoner’s wish, Winram was censured for conveying it, though the request was denied. Next morning, at nine o’clock, the governor of the castle, on sitting down to breakfast, asked Wishart to eat with him. Wishart consented and, with the governor’s consent, consecrated bread and wine, and distributed to those who sat with him, also partaking himself. He then closed with prayer. This narrative has been incorporated by David Buchanan in his edition of Knox’s “History.”

Lindsay of Pitscottie’s narrative betrays the credulous character of its author, and may be dismissed summarily. The statements of Buchanan are unsupported by Knox. As Knox was associated with Winram in preparing the standards of the Reformed Church, he was as likely as any other to obtain from him what he might divulge respecting his last interview with Wishart. [51] But Knox remarks emphatically that “he could not show” what had occurred on that occasion.¹⁴⁶ Further, at the time that Wishart was at St. Andrews undergoing his sufferings, Knox was resident in the neighbouring county of Haddington, while Buchanan was in exile. Knox, too, was an inmate of the castle in which the martyr was imprisoned, little more than a year after his death; and Buchanan did not compose his “History” till nearly thirty years afterwards. If the governor of the castle related that Wishart dispensed the Holy Communion, Knox must have heard the narrative, and he could have no motive for suppressing it. But it is extremely improbable that one occupying the position of governor of the cardinal’s castle, would venture to allow a condemned heretic to consecrate the eucharist. By so doing, and more especially by partaking of the elements himself, he would have rendered himself liable to a charge of sacrilege, attended with imprisonment or death. Wishart, after his trial, would no doubt be carried back to his dungeon under the rude guardianship of unfeeling warders.

Wishart’s alleged prediction as to Beaton’s death is unnoticed in the black-letter volume printed shortly after his execution. Foxe, in his first and in the text of his subsequent editions, omits reference to it; and Knox, who ascribes to the martyr what he did not claim, a sort of foreknowledge, is silent on the point. But on other grounds the preacher has been charged with conspiring against the cardinal’s life. And this charge must be fully met.

¹⁴⁴ Lindsay of Pitscottie’s *History of Scotland*, from 1431 to 1565, Edin., 1728 folio, p. 190.

¹⁴⁵ *History of Scotland*, by George Buchanan, Lond., 1690, folio, vol. ii., p. 96.

¹⁴⁶ Knox’s *History*, Edin. 1846, vol. i., p. 168.

Wishart returned to Scotland at the close of July 1543, and in April of the following year, a person described as a “Scottish man called Wyshert,” bore a letter from Crichton of Brunstone to the court of Henry VIII, of which the contents indicate a conspiracy for the destruction of the cardinal. The question arises as to whether the preacher and the messenger were one and the same person. To arrive at a proper conclusion, the conspiracy against Beaton must be considered in its details.

[52] When James V died unexpectedly in December 1542, there was found in his possession a roll, containing the names of three hundred and sixty persons suspected of heresy. The roll was in the handwriting of Beaton, who had desired the king to confiscate all who were named in it. To carry out his plans, Beaton presented a document which he described as the king’s will, constituting him governor of the kingdom, and guardian of the infant princess. That document was pronounced a forgery, and by general consent, the Earl of Arran was appointed governor.¹⁴⁷

A proposal for the marriage of the infant queen with the Prince of Wales was, in the interests of the Church, keenly opposed by the cardinal. Letters from him to the House of Guise, inviting armed resistance, being discovered, he was seized by the governor, and on the charge of treason, warded in Blackness Castle. He regained his liberty, but in the meantime efforts were put forth by Henry VIII to have him brought as a prisoner to England.¹⁴⁸ From among those whose lands the cardinal had proposed to confiscate, Henry found no difficulty in procuring the services of some well-suited to his purpose. With these were joined a former friend of the cardinal, Alexander Crichton of Brunstone, a person of uncommon skill and vigorous enterprise. On Crichton’s promise of co-operation, Henry honoured him with a private letter. Crichton acknowledged the royal missive, in a communication dated the 16th of November 1543, in which he assured Sir Ralph Sadler he would do his best to fulfil the king’s wishes.¹⁴⁹

But the cardinal, though widely obnoxious, could not be assailed without much risk and difficulty. As chancellor of the kingdom, and a prince of the Church, any injury done to him would be adjudged treason. He had obtained bonds of manrent from many of the nobles and the principal landowners, by which they had become bound to support him with their persons and goods.¹⁵⁰ [53] Crichton therefore could not readily fulfil the wishes of his royal correspondent. The mission which he undertook in November 1543 was not in shape until the following April. We are informed of the condition of affairs at that period, in the following communication from the Earl of Hertford to the king:

“Please it your Highness to understand that this day arrived here with me, the Earl of Hertforde, a Scottish man called Wyshert, and brought me a letter from the Lord of Brimstone, which I send your Highness herewith. And according to his request, I have taken order for the repair of the said Wyshert to Your Majesty by poste, both for the delivery of such letters as he has to Your Majesty from the said Brunstone; and also for the declaration of his credence which as I can

¹⁴⁷ Sadler’s *State Papers*, vol. i., pp. 94, 138.

¹⁴⁸ *ib.*, vol. i., pp. 221, 249, 278, 312.

¹⁴⁹ *ib.*, vol. i., p. 332.

¹⁵⁰ Knox’s *History*, Edin. 1846, vol. i., p. 172.

perceive by him consists in two points: one is that the Lord of Graunge, late treasurer of Scotland, the Master of Rothes, the Earl of Rothes' eldest son, & John Charters, would attempt either to apprehend or slay the Cardinal at some time when he passes thorough the Fife land,¹⁵¹ as he does sundry times to Saint Andrews. And in case they can so apprehend him, will deliver him to Your Majesty. This attempt, he says, they would venture if they knew Your Majesty's pleasure in this; and what support and maintenance Your Majesty would minister to them after the execution of the same, in case they should be persued afterwards by any of their enemies. The other is that in case your Majesty would grant to them a convenient entertainment to keep 1000 or 1500 men in wages for a month or two, joining with the power of the Earl Marshall, the said Master of Rothes, the Lord of Calder, and others of the Lord Grey's friends, they will take upon themselves at such time as Your Majesty's army shall be in Scotland, to destroy the abbey and town of Arbroyth, being the Cardinal's, and all the other bishops' and abbots' houses and country on that side of the water thereabouts; and to apprehend all those which they say are the principal impugnators of the amyte ¹⁵² between England and Scotland, for which they should have a good opportunity, as they say, when the power of the said bishops and abbots will resort toward Edinburgh to resist Your Majesty's army.

[54] And for the execution of these things the said Wyshert says that the said Earl Marshall and others above named will capitulate with your Majesty in writing under their hands and seals before they desire any supply or aid of money at Your Majesty's hands. This is the effect of his credence with other sundry notifications of the great contention and division that is at this present time within the realm of Scotland, which we do not doubt he will declare to Your Majesty at good length. — Also I, the said Earl of Hertford, have received this day certain letters from the Lord Wharton and Sir Robert Bowes, with the copies of such letters as were written by the Earl of Glencarne's son, & Bishop, the Earl of Lennox's secretary, to be sent into Scotland to the same Earl. Which copies the said Lord Wharton & Mr. Bowes attained by such means as will appear to your Majesty by their said letters, which with the said copies we also send to Your Highness, here inclosed, together with certain other letters which arrived here also this day from the Lord Ewers, containing certain exploits done in Scotland. Finally, the Lord William Howard, being at Tynemont, sent a letter this morning to me, the said Earl of Hertford, whereby it appears that certain of the victuallers' ships have arrived there, and some of them report that yesterday in the morning they saw my Lord Admiral with the rest of the fleet on seaboard Hull making towards here. So that the wind continuing as it is, they will be at Tynemont this night or tomorrow, with the grace of God, who preserves Your Royal Majesty.” ¹⁵³

This letter is endorsed, “Dispatched the 16th of April at three o'clock in the afternoon.”

In the preceding communication, Lord Hertford informs the king, through the messenger Wishart, that Crichton of Brunstone had made two propositions. In the first instance he undertook, on certain conditions, that the Master of Rothes, Kirkaldy of Grange, and Charteris of Kinfauns, would seize the cardinal, and either slay him or send him a prisoner into England. Or on obtaining the necessary support from the English king, the Earl Marischal, the Earl of Rothes, Sandilands of Calder, and other associates of Lord Gray, would

¹⁵¹ Fife is a council area in eastern Scotland. It is situated on a peninsula bordered by the Firth of Tay to the north, the Firth of Forth to the south, and the North Sea to the east.

¹⁵² *Amyte*: (amity) a formal agreement or treaty between nations.

¹⁵³ State Papers, Henry VIII, vol. v., pp. 377, 378.

destroy the Abbey of Arbroath, of which the cardinal was commendator, and from which he derived a portion of his wealth. [55] On the subject of these proposals, the messenger, Wishart, was admitted by Henry to a private interview, of which the result is set forth in the following dispatch from the Lords of the Privy Council to Lord Hertford:

“After our most hearty commendations to your good Lordship, these shall be to signify to you that this bearer, Wishert, who came from Brounston, has been with the King’s Majesty, and for his credence ever declared the same matters in substance of which Your Lordship has written here. And he has received for an answer touching the feats against the Cardinal, that in case the Lords and Gentlemen which he named will venture the same earnestly and do the best they can to the uttermost of their powers to bring the same to pass indeed — and thereupon not being able to continue longer in Scotland, will be forced to flee into this realm for refuge — his Highness will be contented to accept them & relieve them as it pertains. And as to their second desire to have the entertainment of a certain number of men at his Highness’ charges, promising therefore to covenant with His Majesty in writing under their seals, to burn and destroy the Abbots, Bishops, and other Kirkmen’s lands, His Majesty has answered that because his Highness’ Army, by the grace of God, will have entered into Scotland and be ready to return again before His Highness can send down to them, and they can send back and have an answer for a conclusion in this matter, his Highness thinks the time is too short to commune any further in it, in this manner. But if they effectually mind him, and destroy, as they have offered to do upon his Majesty’s army being in Scotland; and for their true and upright dealings with His Majesty in this, he will deliver to Your Lordship, my Lord Lieutenant, such hostages as you think convenient. His Highness will take order that you my Lord, will deliver to them £1000 sterling for their furnishings in that behalf, which it is his Majesty’s pleasure that you cause to be paid to them in case they break with you in this matter; and deliver to you such hostages as aforesaid. Thus fare your Lordship right heartily well. From Greenwich the 26th of April 1544.

“Your good Lordship’s assured loving friends, Cherles Suffolk, Tho. Weston, Ste. Winton, John Gage, T. Chene, Antony Wyngfield, William Pagot.”¹⁵⁴

[56] Here we arrive at a point from which to determine whether the messenger who conveyed to the Court of Henry VIII, Crichton’s proposals for the destruction of the cardinal, was identical with the Reformed preacher. The conspiracy, it will be remarked, had up till then proceeded solely on political grounds. Henry desired the cardinal’s destruction on account of his persistent opposition to the proposed alliance on which he had set his heart; while Crichton sought to avenge a private feud, and his coadjutors sought to resent a scheme of confiscation. Was Wishart *the preacher* likely to implicate himself in such a plot? Politically it was not for the interests of the Protestant cause that he should. Could he have done so, unknown to the cardinal, when treason and sacrilege are not included among the numerous charges brought against him at his trial? Does Wishart’s character, concerning which testimony is borne by two persons to whom he was personally known, warrant the belief that he would seek to destroy life? He is described by Tylney as “a man, modest, temperate, fearing God, hating covetousness, forgiving those who would have slain him, and seeking to do good

¹⁵⁴ Haynes’ *Collection of State Papers*, Lond., 1740, folio, p. 32.

to all and hurt to none.” Knox ¹⁵⁵ styles him “a meek lamb,” and further describes him as “a man of such graces, as before him were never heard within this nation.”

Both in Lord Hertford’s dispatch to Henry VIII, and in the Privy Council’s answer, Crichton’s messenger is styled *Wyshert* or *Wishert*. George Wishart was in holy orders, and was a Master of Arts. His ecclesiastical connection is referred to in the letters contained in the Cottonian MSS. He is described as a “clerk” by his contemporary Bishop Lesley, ¹⁵⁶ who belonged to the Romish Church. He is named as Master of Arts by Tylney, who remarks that he was “commonly called Maister George of Bennet’s College.”

[57] He is styled “Maister George “by Knox.¹⁵⁷ In the Treasurer’s Accounts,¹⁵⁸ he also receives the prenomens of Master. Had Crichton been privileged to employ a messenger who was a Master of Arts and in orders, he would not have allowed the facts to remain unnoticed. And if his messenger had been the Cambridge scholar whom the Scottish Commissioners took under their protection, it is absolutely certain that he would have said so. By the Earl of Hertford, the messenger would have been described otherwise than as “a Scottish man called Wyshert.”

But it may, we think, conclusively be shown who the messenger really was. There was a connection by marriage between the House of Wishart of Pitarrow, and that of Learmont of Balcomie.¹⁵⁹ James Learmont of Balcomie was one of the commissioners employed in negotiating the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the infant Queen Mary. He was an avowed enemy of the cardinal, who latterly sought his apprehension.¹⁶⁰ He was also an associate of Norman Leslie, to whose sister his son George was afterwards married.¹⁶¹

At this period, the members of the House of Pitarrow consisted of John Wishart, who owned the estate, his brother George the preacher, and James of “Carnebeg,” his second brother, who was father of four sons — John, James, Alexander, and George. John Wishart, eldest son of James of Carnebeg, ultimately became a judge in the Supreme Court, and probably had legal training. If he studied law at Edinburgh, he would have an opportunity in that city of meeting the associates of his kinsman, the Laird of Balcomie. Two of these associates, Norman Leslie, and Kirkaldy, younger of Grange, were early conspirators against the cardinal.

If John Wishart became Crichton’s messenger, his designation in the Earl of Hertford’s letter was sufficiently appropriate. His father, as a younger brother of the Laird of Pitarrow, owned only a small holding on the estate, and he had no certain prospects himself, nor any well-defined social status.

¹⁵⁵ Knox’s *History*, vol. i., pp. 125, 168.

¹⁵⁶ *The History of Scotland*, written in the Scottish vernacular for the use of Queen Mary, by John Lesley, Bishop of Ross. Published by the Bannatyne Club in 1830, from a MS. belonging to the Earl of Leven, p. 191. Bishop Lesley was born in 1526, and was therefore in his twentieth year at the period of Wishart’s martyrdom.

¹⁵⁷ Knox’s *History*, ed. 1846, vol. L, pp. 125-169.

¹⁵⁸ Treasurer’s Accounts, March 1546.

¹⁵⁹ See *supra*. (above)

¹⁶⁰ See *postea*. (afterwards)

¹⁶¹ Douglas’s Peerage, p. 588.

[58] Was this John Wishart likely to support the cause of the Reformation by joining in a conspiracy against the cardinal? His career is depicted in the accompanying history of his House. He was an active promoter of the Protestant doctrines, and one of those who sat in Parliament when the Reformed Church was recognised. He was an adherent of the Regent Murray, who granted him land and honoured him with knighthood. But like his contemporaries, Kirkaldy of Grange, and Maitland of Lethington, he lacked consistency. As paymaster of the Reformed clergy, his conduct was doubtful. He deserted the Regent Murray, who was largely his benefactor. He joined Kirkaldy of Grange when he held the Castle of Edinburgh on behalf of the dethroned queen, and in virtual opposition to the Protestant government. He rejoiced in contention, and was chargeable with avarice. Having joined Kirkaldy on behalf of Queen Mary in 1573, he was not unlikely to have associated with the same wavering statesman in plotting the death of Beaton about thirty years previously.

But George Wishart *the preacher* was, on the father's side, uncle of John Wishart, the supposed conspirator. If the preacher was cognisant that his nephew joined in the conspiracy, he was personally identified with it. Doubtless so. But there is no evidence that he was informed of it. He seems to have resided at Pitarrow from the period of his return to Scotland in July 1543, till the spring of 1545, when he commenced preaching at Montrose. The "Scottish man called Wyshert" appears in connection with the conspiracy only in April 1544. If, as we conjecture, John Wishart was studying law at Edinburgh when Learmont of Balcomie made him known to the cardinal's enemies, he may have proceeded on his expedition to the English court without communicating with his relatives at Pitarrow. On the messenger's return, the plot slumbered and was not revived till the following spring, when the name of Wishart no longer appears in the list of conspirators.

[59] Is it an unwarrantable hypothesis that, being latterly informed of his doings, his uncle, the preacher, persuaded him to withdraw from the conspiracy?

Till George Wishart's death, the conspirators made no definite arrangements. They were now actuated by a deadly revenge which was probably stimulated by Learmont of Balcomie, the martyr's relative. It would appear the final plot was in active progress a few weeks after the martyrdom; for on his return from Finhaven early in April, the cardinal learned that he was in danger. Attending the Provincial Synod at Edinburgh in the end of April, the Earl of Angus made an attempt to destroy him.¹⁶² On his return to St. Andrews, he gave instructions that the castle should be repaired and fortified. He next summoned the landowners of Fife to meet him at Falkland, on Monday the 31st of May, ostensibly to consider public affairs, but with the actual purpose of apprehending those persons whose enmity he most dreaded — among whom were Norman Leslie, John Leslie, his uncle, Kirkaldy of Grange, and Learmont of Balcomie.

His purpose was anticipated. On the evening of Friday, the 28th of May, Norman Leslie, with several followers, entered St. Andrews and proceeded to his usual inn. Kirkaldy, younger of Grange, had arrived previously; and John Leslie, whose hostility to the cardinal was well known, came during the night. Next morning the conspirators and their followers, numbering sixteen persons, walked in detached groups in the grounds of the cathedral. On a signal that

¹⁶² Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., p. 172.

the drawbridge was lowered to admit the workmen, Norman Leslie with his followers entered the castle. Engaging the porter in conversation, he enabled James Melville of Raith and William Kirkaldy to cross the drawbridge unobserved. When John Leslie came up, the porter attempted to secure the portcullis, but was struck down. Finding the castle in possession of an armed band, the workmen threw down their tools and dispersed. Kirkaldy guarded a private postern,¹⁶³ while his associates aroused the servants and conducted them from the stronghold.

[60] Hearing the noise, the cardinal threw open his window and inquired the cause. Informed that Norman Leslie had taken the castle, he attempted to escape by the postern. Finding that it was guarded, he returned to his chamber and piled the heavier furniture against the door. John Leslie knocked loudly and, announcing his name, demanded admission. "I will have Norman," said the cardinal, "for he is my friend." "Be content with those who are here," was the rejoinder; and on a call for fire, the cardinal opened. John Leslie and another rushed upon him with their swords, but James Melville entreated them to pause, and adjured the cardinal to prepare for death. He especially exhorted him to repent of the murder of Wishart, for which the Divine vengeance had now overtaken him. The conspirators then fell upon him with their swords. His last words were, "Fy, fy, I am a priest, all is gone."¹⁶⁴

The events of the morning were a terrible sequel to the *auto-da-fe* of March.¹⁶⁵ The citizens were in consternation. The provost convened the town council, and proceeding to the ramparts of the castle, inquired whether the cardinal was alive.¹⁶⁶ The answer was that he was dead; and in hideous evidence of the fact, his dead body was suspended on the wall. Not long afterwards, the first congregation of the Protestant Church in Scotland was formed within the castle.

Though neither the first nor last of those who suffered, George Wishart rendered real and important service to the cause of the Reformation in Scotland. Through his instrumentality John Knox was led to exchange the retired life of a private tutor, for that of a public teacher of the Protestant doctrines. Though his ministry was of short duration, Wishart lived at a time when men who resisted prevailing error, accomplished within a few months, the work of a generation. His fervent preaching was long gratefully remembered in Dundee.

[61] The singular devotedness of the Covenanters of Ayrshire was not more derived from the early confession of the Lollards of Kyle,¹⁶⁷ than from the example and preaching of George Wishart. Wishart's character is celebrated by John Johnstone, in the following epigram:

"Quam bene conveniunt divinis nomina rebus
Divinae hic Sophiae corque oculusque viget
Qui Patris arcanam Sophiam, coelique recessus,
Corde fovens terris Numina tanta aperit

¹⁶³ *Postern*: A small gate in the rear of a fort or castle.

¹⁶⁴ Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. i., pp. 173-177.

¹⁶⁵ *Auto-da-fei*: the public ceremony and execution by burning of heretics.

¹⁶⁶ *ib.*, vol. i., p. 178; Bishop Lesley's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1830, 4to, p. 19.

¹⁶⁷ Calderwood's *History of the Church of Scotland*, vol. i., p. 49.

Unus amor Christus. Pro Christo concitus ardor
 Altius humanis Enthea corda rapit,
 Praeteritis aptans praesentia judicat omnia
 Et ventura dehinc ordine quaeque docet
 Ipse suam mortem tempusque modumque profatur
 Fataque carnifici tristia sacrilego
 Terrificam ad flammam stat imperterritus. Ipsa
 Quin stupet invictos sic pavefacto animos
 Ut vix ausa dehinc sit paucos carpere. Tota
 Ilicet innocui victa cruore viri est.”¹⁶⁸

Describing Wishart as in the pulpit alike uncompromising in the exposure of error as in reproving those who rejected the Gospel message, Knox expatiates on the gentleness of his private life. Tylney, who was his pupil at Cambridge, remarks that he was “courteous” and “lowly.”

[62] To the poor at Cambridge he supplied food and raiment, and provided some with monthly, and others with weekly donatives. A diligent instructor, he assisted his pupils at their private readings, as well as in the public school. Though of grave deportment, his manners were mild, rather than austere. He was of a tall, slight figure, had a dark complexion, and wore a long beard, and a small French cap. He dressed in “a fustian doublet,” with black stockings, and a frieze gown.

To his erudition and accomplishments Knox and Tylney bear strong testimony. The bishops at St. Andrews, who condemned him, did not venture to rebut his arguments. The clergy at Bristol attempted his discomfiture only by violence. Apart from the power of his public teaching, and the excellence of his private virtues, as a martyr he holds a place on the roll of the illustrious. He died to assert his testimony against sacerdotal arrogance and priestly corruption, which are the curse of nations. In his blood the Scottish Church took root, and so long as his countrymen cherish Protestantism and love liberty, his memory will be fragrant.

¹⁶⁸ MS. *Poems of John Johnstone*, in the Advocates Library, Edinburgh. A portion of the epigram has thus been rendered by an ingenious friend:

“How good a thing it is in one to find,
 His name the mirror of a virtuous mind;
 And well may Wishart claim the spotless heart
 Where heavenly wisdom breathes in every part;
 Christ his sole love, he doth unfold the store,
 Of all his bosom holds of sacred lore.
 Celestial themes are his, and he displays
 The hidden mystery of the Father’s ways;
 Fired with the love of Christ, his zealous heart
 Prophetic soars above all human art.
 Dauntless amidst devouring flames he stands,
 Which shrink as loath to kiss the martyr’s hands;
 No trembling victim now attests their rage,
 For fiercest fires doth innocence assuage.”

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE CHURCHES OF SWITZERLAND.

The following English translation of the first Helvetian Confession was composed by George Wishart. The original Confession was under the direction of a conference held at Basel in January 1536, prepared in Latin by the Reformers Bullinger, Myconius, Grynaeus, Leo Juda, and Grossmann. In the following March it received the united sanction of the representatives of the different Swiss churches at a second conference at Basel. In versions of Latin and German it was submitted to an assembly at Wittenberg by Bucer and Capito, and also to the Protestant princes at the meeting at Smalkald in February 1537, and was on both occasions approved. Subsequent to the latter event, Wishart produced his English translation. From a unique copy, formerly in the possession of Mr. Richard Heber, Wishart's version has been reprinted in the "Miscellany of the Wodrow Society." From that work it is transferred to these pages. The original is a tract of fifteen leaves octavo,¹⁶⁹ in black letter. There is no date or printer's name, but it is believed to have been printed at London by Thomas Raynalde about the year 1548. The title-page is inscribed:

"This confession was first written and set out by the ministers of the church and congregation of Switzerland, where all godliness is received, and the word held in most reverence, and from there it was sent to the Emperor's majesty, then holding a great counsel or parliament in the year of our Lord God, 1537 in the month of February. Translated out of Latin by George Usher (*i.e.*, Wishart), a Scotchman, who was burned in Scotland, the year of our Lord 1546.

[64].

"OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE.

"The Canonical or holy Scripture, which is the Word of God, taught and given by the Holy Spirit, and published to the world by the prophets and holy apostles, which also is the most perfect and ancient science and doctrine of wisdom, it alone contains consummately all godliness and all sorts and manner of fashion of life.

"OF THE EXPOSITION OF SCRIPTURE.

"The interpretation, or exposition of this holy writ, ought to and should be sought out of itself, so that it should be the sole interpreter, the rule of charity and faith having governance.

"OF MAN'S TRADITIONS.

"As to other things, of traditions of men, however beautiful and however much received they are, whatever traditions withdraw us and stop us from the Scripture, of such we answer the sayings of the Lord, as of things hurtful and unprofitable, 'They worship me in vain, teaching the doctrines of man.' Matt. 15.

¹⁶⁹ *Octavo*: a book size resulting from folding each sheet of paper into eight leaves.

“OF THE HOLY FATHERS.

“For which sort of interpretation so far as the Holy Fathers has not gone from it, not only do we receive them as interpretations of the Scripture, but also we honour and worship them as chosen and beloved instruments of God.

“THE END AND INTENT OF THE SCRIPTURE.

“The principal intent of all the canonical Scripture is to declare that God is benevolent and friendly-minded to mankind; and that he has declared that kindness in and through Jesus Christ his only son: which kindness is received by faith; but this faith is effectuous through charity (love), and expressed in an innocent life.

“OF GOD.

“Of God we believe in this way: that he is almighty, being one in substance, and three in persons. Which even as he has created by his Word, that is, his Son, all things out of nothing, so by his Spirit and providence he governs, preserves, and nourishes most truly, righteously, and wisely, all things.

[65]

“OF MAN.

“Man, which is the most perfect image of God on earth, and also is the chief dignity and honour among all visible creatures, being made of soul and body; of which two the body is mortal, the soul immortal; when he was created by God holy, by falling in vice and sin through his own fault, drew with him in that same ruin and fall, and so subjected all mankind to the same calamity and wretchedness that he fell in.

“OF ORIGINAL SIN.

“And so this pestiferous infection which men call Original, has infected and overspread the whole kind of man, so far that by no help (he being the son of wrath and vengeance and enemy of God) could be healed by any means but by the help of God only. For if there is any good that remains in man after the fall, that same being jointly made weaker and weaker by our vice turns to the worse; because the strength and power of evil overcomes it, and neither suffers us to follow reason nor yet to exercise the godliness of our mind.

“OF FREE WILL.

“Therefore we attribute such free will to man as we, who witting and willing to do good, feel and experience of evil. Also, we may truly do evil of our own will; but we may not embrace and follow good (unless we are illuminated, stirred up, and mounted by the grace of Christ): For ‘God is he who works in us both to will, to perform, and to accomplish for his own good will’s sake; and from God comes our health and salvation, but of ourself comes perdition.

“OF THE ETERNAL MIND OF GOD TO RESTORE MAN.

“And however it is that through his fault man was subject to damnation, and was also run under the just indignation of God to take vengeance upon him, yet God the father never ceased to take merciful care over him. Which thing is manifest not only from the first promises and the whole law which, as it is holy and good, teaching us the will of God, righteousness, and

truth, so it works wrath and stores up sin within us, and does not slacken; and that is not through any fault of itself, but through our vice; but it also clearly appears through Christ, who was ordained and given for that purpose.

[66]

“OF JESUS CHRIST AND WHAT IS DONE BY HIM.

“This Christ, the very Son of God, and very God and very man also, was made our brother; at the time appointed he took upon him a whole man, made of soul and body, having two natures unpermixed ¹⁷⁰ and one dual person, to the intent that he should restore to life us who were dead, and make us arise of God annexed with himself. He also, after he had taken upon him from the immaculate Virgin,¹⁷¹ by operation of the Holy Ghost, flesh, which was holy because of the union of the Godhead, which is and also was like our flesh in all things except in sinfulness. And because it behoved the sacrifice for sin to be clean and immaculate, gave that same flesh to death, to expel all our sin by that means. And he also, to the intent that we should have one full and perfect hope and trust of our immortality, has raised up again from death to life his own flesh, and has set it and placed it in heaven at the right hand of his Almighty Father.

“And there he sits our victorious champion, our guider, our captain, and head, also our highest bishop indeed, sin, death, and hell, being victoriously overcome by him, and defends our cause, and pleads it perpetually until he reforms and fashions us to that likeness to which we were created, and brings us to be partakers of eternal life. And we look for him, and believe that he shall come at the end of all ages to be our true righteous just Judge, and shall pronounce sentence against all flesh, which shall be raised up before to that judgement, and that he shall exalt the godly above the heavens, but the ungodly he shall condemn both body and soul to eternal destruction.

“And as he alone is our mediator and intercessor, host and sacrifice, bishop, lord, and our king, we also acknowledge and confess him alone to be our atonement and ransom, satisfaction, expiation, our wisdom, our defence, and our only deliverer — utterly refusing all other means of life and salvation, except thus by Christ alone.

[67]

“THE END OF THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

“And therefore, the whole doctrine of the Evangelists annunciate and show to be the first and chiefly to be inculcated and taught, that we are safe only by the mercy of God, and merit of our Saviour Christ. And that men may better perceive and understand how necessary is the mercy of God, and Christ’s merits for them, their sins should be clearly shown to them by the law, and remission by Christ’s death.

¹⁷⁰ *Unpermixed*: not blended or combined into one substance or identity.

¹⁷¹ This is not the immaculate conception of Mary, per the Roman Catholic dogma of 1854. Rather, it distinguishes “virgin,” meaning a young woman, from a woman who has never been with a man (which this affirms).

“OF FAITH AND OF THE POWER OF IT.

“And these such godly benefits, with the very sanctification of the Holy Spirit, we obtain by faith, the very true gift of God, and not through any other power or strength of ourselves or our merits.

“This faith is one certain and undoubted substance and apprehension of all things that we hope for to come of the kindness of God, and it comes first out of self-charity: it works noble fruits of all virtues. Yet notwithstanding, we attribute nothing to the deeds; although they are godly, yet they are men’s works and acts. But the health and salvation that is obtained, we attribute to the grace of God alone. And truly, this worshipping alone is the very true worshipping of God; faith, I mean, is most pregnant and plentiful of good works, yet without any confidence in those works.

“OF THE CONGREGATION OR CHURCH.

“Also we hold, and believe, that the Church — which is the congregation and election of all holy men, which also is the spouse of Christ, whom he shall present without spot to his Father, washing it in his own blood — is of such lively stones aforesaid ¹⁷² laid upon this lively rock in this manner.

“This Church, though it is evidently known only to the eyes of God, yet by certain external rites instituted by Christ, and by one public and lawful teaching (teaching of the Word of God), not only is it seen and known, but it is also so constituted by them, that without these ceremonies, no man is reckoned to be of this church, unless it is by a singular privilege of God.

“THE MINISTERS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

“And for this reason we grant that the Ministers of the Church are cooperators of God, as Paul calls them, ¹⁷³ by whom God gives and ministers both knowledge of ourself, and remission of sin, and converts men to Himself, raises them up and comforts them, affrays ¹⁷⁴ them also, and judges them; [68] but such that the virtue and efficacy of it we ascribe also to the Lord, and the ministration of the sacraments. For it is manifest that this efficacy and power is not bound nor knit to any creature, but is dispensed liberally and freely to whoever, and whenever, he pleases. For, ‘He that waters is nothing, nor is he that plants anything, but He that gives the increase, which is God.’ ¹⁷⁵

“THE POWER OF THE CHURCH.

“The authority to preach God’s Word, and to feed the Lord’s flock, which properly is the Power of the Key, prescribing and commanding all men, both high and low, all alike, should be holy and inviolate; and should be committed only to those who are fit for it — and chosen either by the election of God, or else by a sure and advised election of the Church; or by their will, to whom the Churches depute and appoint that office of choosing.

¹⁷² “aforesaid” here seems to refer to their being “chosen before the foundation of the world.” (Eph 1.4)

¹⁷³ 1Cor 16.16.

¹⁷⁴ *Affray*: here it means to impart the fear of God to them.

¹⁷⁵ 1Cor 3.7.

“THE CHOOSING OF MINISTERS OR OFFICERS.

“This ministration and office should be granted to no man but to him whom the ministers of the Church, and those to whom the charge is given by the Churches, and found judged to be of knowledge in the law of God, and of innocent life. Which is saying that it is the very election of God, it is well and justly approved by the voice of the Church, and the imposition of hands by the heads of the priests.

“THE HEAD AND SHEPHERD OF THE CHURCH.

“Christ, truly, himself is the very true head of his church and congregation, and the only pastor and head; and he also gives presidents, heads, and teachers, to the intent that in the external administration they should use the power of the church well and lawfully. Therefore we do not know those who are heads and pastors in name only, nor yet the Romish heads.

“THE DUTY OF MINISTERS OR OFFICERS.

“The chief and principal office of this ministration is to preach repentance and remission of sin through Jesus Christ; to pray continually for the people; to give diligence wholly to holy studies and to the Word of God, and resist and pursue the devil always with the Word of God, [69] as with the sword of the Spirit, and do that with a deadly hatred, and by all means to chase him away; to defend the holy citizens of Christ. And by all means compel and reprove the faulty and vicious; and to exclude from the church those who stray too far, and do that by a godly consent and agreement of those who are chosen by the ministers and magistrates for correction, or to punish them by any other convenient way and profitable means, so long until they come to amendment, and so are safe. For this is returning to the church again, for one such citizen of Christ: if he acknowledges and confesses his error with converted mind and life. For all this doctrine seeks and wills that we require willing and healthful correction, exhilarate, or comfort all godly by a new study of godliness.

“OF THE POWER OR STRENGTH OF SACRAMENTS.

“There are two Sacraments which are named in the Church of God: Baptism and Hosting.¹⁷⁶ these are tokens of secret things, that is, of godly and spiritual things, from which things they take the name; they are not naked signs, but they are signs and verities together. For in Baptism the water is the sign, but the thing and verity is regeneration and adoption in the people of God. In the Hosting and Thanksgiving, the bread and the wine are signs, but the thing and verity is the communion of the body of our Lord; health and salvation are found, and remission of sins, which are received by faith, even as the signs and tokens are received by the bodily mouth.

“Therefore we affirm the Sacraments not only to be badges and tokens of Christian society, but also to be signs of the grace of God, by which the ministers work with God, to the end that the promise brings the work to pass; but so, as said before about the ministration of the word, that all the same power is ascribed to the Lord.

¹⁷⁶ Originally “howslynge” – “host” refers to the bread in the Lord’s Supper, which represents Christ’s body. In a sense, He is “hosting” by inviting believers to dine with Him at His table.

“OF BAPTISM.

“We affirm Baptism to be by the institution of the Lord, the laver ¹⁷⁷ of regeneration, which regeneration the Lord exhibits to his chosen by a visible sign, by the ministration of the congregation, as aforesaid. In this holy laver we wash our infants for this reason: [70] because it is wickedness to reject and cast out of the fellowship and company of the people of God those who are born of us, who are the people of God, except those who are expressly commanded to be rejected, by the voice of God; and for this reason chiefly: because we should not ungodly presume their election.

“OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

“But the mystical supper is that in which the Lord offers his body and his blood, that is, his own self, truly, to his own, for this intent: that he might live more and more in them, and they in him. Not so that the body and blood of the Lord are communicated naturally to the bread and wine, or enclosed in them as in one place; or put in them by any carnal or marvelous presence; but because the body and blood of our Lord are received truly by one faithful soul, and because the bread and the wine, by the institution of the Lord, are tokens by which the very communion or participation of the Lord’s body and blood are exhibited by the Lord himself, through the ministration of the church — not to be a corruptible food of the body, but to be a nourishment and food of eternal life.

“And this holy food we use often for this reason. For when through the monition and remembrance of it, we behold with the eye of our faith, the death and blood of him that was crucified, and remember our salvation and health, not without a taste of heavenly life and very true feeling of eternal life — when we do this, we are wonderfully refreshed through this spiritual living and eternal good. And with an unspeakable sweetness, we exult and rejoice with a mirth inexpressible in words, for the salvation that is found; and we all and whole are utterly effused with all our power and strength, in giving thanks for so wonderful a benefit of Christ toward us.

“Therefore it is greatly without our deservings that some allege and say of us, that we attribute little to the Holy Sacraments; for they are holy things and honourable, because they are instituted and ordained by our high priest Christ, and received; exhibiting the things that they signify in their own manner as aforesaid; being witness to the thing that is done in deed; representing such high and hard things, and it brings by wonderful correspondence & likeness of similitude, a light and a clearness to the ministers that they signify — so wholly is our belief and estimation of the Sacraments, but truly appropriating the virtue of quickening and sanctifying to him alone who is life, to whom be all honour & praise forever. Amen.

[71]

“OF COMING TO CHURCH.

“We believe and think the holy conventions and gatherings should be held in this manner & sort: so that first, chiefly and before all things, the word of God be preached to the people openly in an open & public place, and that is daily: and the secret & obscure places of the

¹⁷⁷ *Laver*: wash basin.

Scripture be opened & declared by fit and competent men. And that by the Holy Supper of thanks, called Hosting, the faith of the godly often be exercised, and that they should be continually in prayer for all men & for the necessities of all men. But the rest of the ceremonies, just as they are unprofitable, so they are innumerable, such as vessels, garments, wax, lights, altars, gold, silver, in so much that they serve to subvert the true religion of God — and chiefly Idols & Images that stand open to be worshipped, and give offence & slander; all such profane and ungodly things, we abandon, reject, and put away from the holy congregation & convention.

“OF HERETICS & SCHISMATICS.

“We also abandon & reject from our holy conventions all those who depart from the society & fellowship of the holy Church, and bring in strange or ungodly sects and opinions. With which evil the Anabaptists are chiefly infected at this time; which we judge should be constrained and punished by the magistrates and high powers if they obstinately resist and will not obey the monition of the Church, and with the intent that they should not infect and corrupt the flock of God through their wicked evil.

“OF THINGS INDIFFERENT.

“The things that are called, and indeed also are indifferent, a godly man may use them freely however, and in every place, and at all times; yet notwithstanding, he should use them with knowledge and of charity (love) to the glory of God truly, and the edification of the Church and congregation.

[72]

“OF MAGISTRATES OR GOVERNORS.

“And seeing that every magistrate and high power is of God, his chief and principal office is (unless he would rather use tyranny) to defend the true worshipping of God from all blasphemy and to procure true religion, and as the prophet teaches about the voice of God, to execute for his power. In which part a true and sincere preaching of the word of God remains with a right and diligent institution of the discipline of citizens, and of the schools: just correction and nurture, with liberality toward the ministers of the Church with a solicitous and thoughtful charge of the poor, to which end all the riches of the Church are referred. This, I say, has the first and chief place in the execution of the magistrate.

“Then after, to judge the people by equal and godly laws, to exercise and maintain judgment & justice, to defend the commonwealth, and punish transgressors according to their fault, either in goods, their bodies or their lives. And when the magistrate executes these things he honors God as he should in his vocation, and we (however free we are both in our body and in all our goods, and in the studies of our mind and thoughts also, with a true faith) know that we should be subject in holiness to the magistrate and should keep fidelity and promise to him, so long as his commandments, statutes, and empires evidently do not repugn ¹⁷⁸ with Him for whose sake we honour and worship the magistrates.

¹⁷⁸ *Repugn*: to be inconsistent or contend with.

“OF HOLY MATRIMONY.

“We judge Marriage, which was instituted by God for all men, apt and fit therefore, which are not called from it by any other vocation, to repugn holiness of no order; which marriage as the Church authorises & celebrates it, so solemnises it with orison (reverence) & prayer. And therefore we reject & refuse this monkish chastity and all, & hold this slothful & sluggish sort of life of superstitious men, as an abominably invented & excogitate (contrived) thing, and abandon it as a thing repugnant both to the commonwealth & to the Church. And as we confirm and establish marriage, so it belongs to the magistrate to see that it is worthily both begun & worshipped, & not broken but for a just cause.

[73]

“A DECLARATION OR WITNESSING OF OUR MIND.

“It is not our mind to prescribe by these brief chapters a certain rule of the Faith for all Churches & congregations, for we know no other rule of faith but the Holy Scripture. And therefore we are well contented with those who agree with these things, though they use another manner of speaking, or a Confession different apart from to this of ours in word; for the matter should be considered, rather than the words. And therefore we make it free for all men to use their own sort of speaking, as they perceive most profitable for their churches, and we will use the same liberty. And if any man attempts to corrupt the true meaning of this our Confession, he will hear both a confession and a defence of the verity and truth.

“It was our pleasure to use these words at this present time, that we might declare our opinion in our religion & worshipping of God.

“FINIS.

“The Truth will have the upper hand.”

GENEALOGICAL HISTORY OF THE HOUSE OF WISHART.

NISBET's statement as to the family of Wishart having derived descent from Robert, an illegitimate son of David, Earl of Huntingdon, who was styled Guishart on account of his heavy slaughter of the Saracens, is an evident fiction.¹⁷⁹

The name Guiscard, or Wiscard, a Norman epithet used to designate an adroit or cunning person, was conferred on Robert Guiscard, son of Tancrede de Hauterville of Normandy, afterwards Duke of Calabria, who founded the kingdom of Sicily. This noted warrior died on the 27th of July 1085. His surname was adopted by a branch of his House, and the name became common in Normandy and throughout France. Guiscard was the surname of the Norman kings of Apulia in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

John Wychard is mentioned as a small landowner in the Hundred de la Mewe, Buckinghamshire, in the reign of Henry III (1216-1272).¹⁸⁰ During the same reign and that of Edward I (1272-1307), are named as landowners, Baldwin Wyschard or Wistchart, in Shropshire; Nicholas Wychard, in Wanvickshire; Hugh Wischard, in Essex; and William Wischard, in Bucks.¹⁸¹ In the reign of Edward I, Julian Wyecharde is named as occupier of a house in the county of Oxford.¹⁸²

A branch of the House of Wischard obtained lands in Scotland some time prior to the thirteenth century. John Wischard was sheriff of Kincardineshire in the reign of Alexander II (1214-1249). In an undated charter of this monarch, Walter of Lundyn, and Christian his wife, [75] grant to the monks of Arbroath a chaldre of grain, "pro sua fraternitate,"¹⁸³ the witnesses being John Wischard, "vicecomes de Moernes," and his son John.¹⁸⁴ John Wischard is witness to a charter, by Stephen de Kinardley, granting to the church of St. Thomas the Martyr, of Arbroath, the davach¹⁸⁵ of land in Kincardineshire called Petmengartenach. This charter is undated, but as it contains the names of Alexander II and his queen Johanna, it evidently belongs to the period between 1221 and 1249.¹⁸⁶ "J. Wischard vicecomes de Mernez" and John, his son, are witnesses to a charter by Robert Warnebold and Richenda his spouse, granting to the kirk of St. Thomas of Arbroath, all their fief (feodum) in the parish of Fordun, comprising the two Tubertachthas, Glenferkeryn, Kynkell, and Kulback and Monbodachyn.¹⁸⁷ This instrument is undated, but there follows a charter of confirmation by Alexander II, dated the 20th of March, in the twenty-fourth year of his reign (1238).

¹⁷⁹ Nisbet's *System of Heraldry*, Edin., 1816, folio, vol. i., p. 201.

¹⁸⁰ *Rotuli Hundredorum*, vol. i.

¹⁸¹ *Testa, de Nevill, passim*.

¹⁸² *Rotuli Hundredorum*, vol. ii., p. 727.

¹⁸³ [For his brotherhood.](#)

¹⁸⁴ *Reg. Vetus de Aberbrothoc*, p. 97.

¹⁸⁵ [Davach: an ancient Gaelic measure of land area used in Scotland.](#)

¹⁸⁶ *ib.*, p. 179.

¹⁸⁷ *ib.*; pp. 198, 199.

John Wischart, sheriff of the Mearns, or Kincardineshire, was father of three sons. William, the second son, entered the Church. Possessing superior abilities and extensive culture, he became Archdeacon of St. Andrews, and while holding that office was, in 1256, appointed chancellor of the kingdom. He was, in 1270, elected Bishop of Glasgow, but in the same year was postulated to St. Andrews.¹⁸⁸ By the decree of Pope Urban IV, every bishop-elect was required to proceed to Rome for consecration, and Gregory X, the reigning pontiff, insisted that this rule should be obeyed. Disinclined to undertake the long and perilous journey, Bishop Wishart dispatched agents to Rome, begging that he might receive consecration at home. After a long detention, the agents were informed that the papal sanction would be withheld; but, on the persuasion of Edward I, who was then at Rome, on his way from Palestine, the pontiff consented to grant the necessary letters.¹⁸⁹ In 1274 Bishop Wishart was consecrated at Scone, [76] in the presence of the king, several bishops, and many of the nobility. He thereupon resigned his office of chancellor.¹⁹⁰

Along with other prelates of the Scottish Church, Bishop Wishart attended a Council held at Lyons in 1274, when a union was effected with the Eastern Church, and decrees were passed for reducing the mendicant orders, and abolishing pluralities. The two latter reforms were practically unavailing, for, by payments at the court of Rome, mendicant monks were allowed to beg as before, and ambitious clerks were permitted to hold as many benefices as they could procure. In 1275, Bagimund, a papal nuncio,¹⁹¹ arrived in Scotland, and at a council held at Perth, fixed the value of Scottish benefices.¹⁹² The revenues of the bishopric of St. Andrews were estimated at an amount equal to £9450 of sterling money.

Commended by the chronicler, Wyntoun, Bishop William Wischart is by the historian, John of Fordoun, denounced as a pluralist and charged with hypocrisy.¹⁹³ Whatever may have been his private character, his public acts bespeak his praise, for during the seven years he held his bishopric, he founded at St. Andrews the elegant structure of the Dominican monastery, and in superb architecture reared the nave of the cathedral.¹⁹⁴ While engaged with other leading persons in settling the vexed question of the marches between the kingdoms, he was seized with a mortal ailment, and expired at Morebattle in 1278. His remains were conveyed to St. Andrews, and there deposited in the cathedral, near the high altar.¹⁹⁵

Adam, third son of John Wishart, sheriff of the Mearns, had, in 1272, a charter of the lands of Ballandarg and Logie, in the county of Forfar, from Gilbert de Umphraville, Earl of Angus, and a crown charter confirming the same, dated the 13th of July 1280, in which he is styled “Adam Wyschard, filius (son of) Joannis.”

¹⁸⁸ Fordun, lib. λ., p. 133. *Postulated*: nominated for a higher ecclesiastical position while already holding another.

¹⁸⁹ Spottiswoode's *History*, Edin., 1851, 3 vols. 8vo, vol. i., p. 91.

¹⁹⁰ Spottiswoode's *History*, Edin., 1851, 3 vols. 8vo, vol. i., p. 92.

¹⁹¹ *Papal nuncio*: a permanent diplomatic representative of the Holy See to a state or international organization.

¹⁹² The table, commonly called Bagiment's Roll, served as a rule for the prices taken of those who came to sue for benefices at the court of Rome (Spottiswoode's *History*, vol. i., p. 93).

¹⁹³ Fordun's *Scotichronicon*, lib. x., c. 28.

¹⁹⁴ Wyntoun's *Chronicle*, Edin., 1872, vol. ii., p. 258.

¹⁹⁵ Spottiswoode's *History*, vol. i., p. 93; Wyntoun, vol. ii., p. 250.

[77] In 1279 he received from William, Abbot of Arbroath, a charter of the lands of Kenny-Murchardyn, or Kennyneil, in the parish of Kingoldrum, Forfarshire.¹⁹⁶ From him descended the House of Wishart of Logie Wishart, otherwise the Wisharts of that ilk. We shall refer to this branch subsequently.

Sir John Wishart, eldest son of John Wischart, sheriff of the Mearns, obtained the lands of Conveth (Laurencekirk), Halkertoun, and Scottistoun, in the Mearns, from Adam, Abbot of Arbroath. Of these lands, he had a charter of confirmation dated the 21st of June 1246, in which he is designed “Johannes Wyscard, filius Johannis.” By a legal instrument addressed to the Abbot of Arbroath, he became bound not to alienate any portion of his lands without the abbot’s consent.¹⁹⁷ This instrument is undated, but appears to belong to the year 1260. He was knighted by Alexander II, and as Sir John Wishart, he is a witness to the foundation charter of the hospital of Brechin.¹⁹⁸

On the death of Sir John Wishart, which took place in the reign of Alexander III, he was succeeded by his eldest son, also Sir John. This baron, along with his son John, took the oath of fealty to Edward I at Elgin on the 29th of July 1296.¹⁹⁹ During the same year he granted ten merks out of the lands of Redhall and Balfeith, for support of the chapel of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the cathedral of Brechin.²⁰⁰ He died at an advanced age.

In a charter by Margaret, Countess of Douglas, Lady Mar and Garioch, dated Feast of the Assumption 1384, John Wischart is witness to the resignation in her hands of the lands of Colehill and Petgoury.²⁰¹

[78] In 1391, Robert III prohibited Sir William of Keth, sheriff of Kincardineshire, from enforcing payment of certain fines, which the men of Sir John Wishart were adjudged to pay in the last justiciary circuit held within his baliary ²⁰² — these fines amounting to £14.²⁰³

Sir John Wishart, the fifth baron of certain lands in Kincardineshire, is the first of his House styled of Pitarrow. As “Dominus Joannes Wishart de Pittarro,” he, in 1399, entered into an indenture with John, Abbot of Arbroath, respecting the mill and mill lands of Conveth. He died early in the reign of James I, leaving a son, who succeeded to his estate.

Sir John Wischart, second of Pitarrow, went to France in the suite of the Princess Margaret, when in 1434 she was married to the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI. ²⁰⁴ In 1437 £8 were allocated for the farms of the lands of Gurdnes, part of the manor of Firmartin, granted by the king to Sir John Wishart.²⁰⁵ On the 6th of July 1442, “Sir John Wyschart, lord of Pettarrow,

¹⁹⁶ Dalrymple’s *Hist. Collections*, Edin., 1705, p. 217; Reg. Vet. de Aberd., 332; Jervise’s *Angus and Mearns*, p. 347.

¹⁹⁷ Reg. Vet. de Aberbrothoc, *passim*.

¹⁹⁸ Reg. Epis. Brechin., vol. i., p. 7.

¹⁹⁹ Ragman Roll, pp. 103, 109.

²⁰⁰ Reg. Epis. Brechin., vol. i., pp. 59-61.

²⁰¹ Reg. Epis. Aberd., p. 331.

²⁰² *Baliary*: refers to a historical civic office similar to that of a magistrate or alderman, primarily found in burghs.

²⁰³ Rotuli Compotorum in Scaccaris, vol. ii., p. 177.

²⁰⁴ Chamberlain Rolls, ii. 117, iii. 367.

²⁰⁵ Rotuli Compotorum in Scaccaris, vol. iii., p. 366.

knight,” appeared before the chapter of Brechin, and to the vicar-general, in the absence of the bishop, presented “Schir David Wyschart” as his chaplain, endowing him with ten merks of annual rent from certain lands.²⁰⁶ Having founded, with an endowment of ten merks yearly, from the lands of Redhall and others, the chaplainry of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the cathedral of Brechin, for the salvation of his soul, and that of Janet (Ochterlony), his wife, on the 10th of August 1442 he presented as chaplain “his well-beloved David Wyschart, to be admitted thereto after examination.”²⁰⁷ In an instrument dated the 17th of November 1453, David Wyschard is mentioned as one of the vicars or perpetual chaplains of the church of Brechin.²⁰⁸

In 1447 Alexander Wishart of Pitarrow witnesses the resignation by William Fullerton of the lands of Maryton.²⁰⁹ [79] James Wishart of Pitarrow, who had probably succeeded to the estate as a younger brother, obtained on the 17th of January 1461, a charter from the Abbot of Arbroath, of the mill and mill lands of Conveth. This instrument William Ochterlony of Kelly, designed uncle of James Wishart, subscribed as a witness. In 1471 James Wishart of Pitarrow is mentioned as holding the Constable lands of Brechin. In connection with these lands he is named in a charter dated the 30th of March 1482.²¹⁰ He died in June 1491, leaving a son John, and a daughter Marjory. The latter married Gilbert Middleton of that ilk. In the “Acta Auditorum” of 1493 there is a decree respecting the settlement of her dowry.

John Wishart of Pitarrow did homage on the 25th of February 1492, to Robert Leighton, Abbot of Arbroath, for his lands of Reidhall and others. In June 1493 he is mentioned in a decret of the Lords of Council.²¹¹ In 1499 he appears to have suffered forfeiture, when his lands of Balgillo were granted to others. He married a daughter of Janet, daughter of Lyndsay of Edzell, with whom he got a charter, under the Great Seal, of the lands of Woodtoun and others in the county of Kincardine.

By his wife Janet Lyndsay, John Wishart of Pitarrow had three sons: James, John, and William. John, the second son, along with his elder brother James, entered into an agreement respecting certain lands and other property, on the 19th of March 1508. William, the third son, described as brother-german²¹² of the deceased “Master James Wyshart of Pitarrow,” had, on the 28th of October 1525, a grant from the Abbot of Arbroath of the ward and relief of his brother’s lands. James Wishart, eldest son of John Wishart, had as his first wife, Janet Lyndsay. On the 28th of October 1510, a precept was granted by the Abbot of Arbroath for infesting²¹³ him and “Janet Lyndsay his spouse “in the lands of Redhall, Balfeith, and others, which belonged to his father, John Wishart of Pitarrow. On the 11th of August 1511, he obtained a charter under the Great Seal of the lands of Carnebege, in the county of Kincardine.

²⁰⁶ Reg. Epis. Brechin., p. 58.

²⁰⁷ *ib.*, p. 59.

²⁰⁸ *ib.*, p. 96.

²⁰⁹ *ib.*, ii. 63.

²¹⁰ Reg. Epis. Brechin., ii. 117.

²¹¹ Acts of Lords of Council, 1466-1494.

²¹² [Brother-german refers to a full brother, meaning a brother born to the same parents.](#)

²¹³ [Infesting: the legal act of giving symbolical possession of land to a person.](#)

[80] By James IV, he was appointed “Justice Clerk ²¹⁴ and King’s Advocate” in December 1513, offices which he retained till some time between the years 1520 and 1524 He was a member of the General Council which was held at Perth on the 26th of November 1513, to meet Monsieur Labatie and Mr. James Ogilvy, ambassadors from Louis XII, to confer respecting the renewal of the French league and the return of the Duke of Albany.²¹⁵ On the 13th of November 1516, he had a charter of the lands of Easter and Wester Howlands, Howlawshead, and others. He died before May 1525.

Subsequent to the 28th of October 1510, James Wishart married as his second wife Elizabeth Learmont, a daughter or near relation of James Learmont of Balcomie, in Fife. On the 30th of April 1512, he received, along with “Elizabeth Learmont his spouse,” a royal charter of the lands of Easter and Wester Pitarrow, upon the resignation of his father, John Wishart of Pitarrow, reserving to his father, and Janet Lyndsay his spouse, their “frank tenement of the said lands during their lives.” ²¹⁶ Of his 1st marriage were born two sons, John and James, and two daughters, Janet and another; of the 2nd marriage, a son **George**, *the future martyr*.

Janet, daughter of James Wishart of Pitarrow by his first marriage, espoused James Durham of Pitkerrow. His other daughter married George Leslie, third laird of Pitnamoon, by whom she had an only daughter.²¹⁷

John, eldest son of James Wishart of Pitarrow, held a portion of his lands from the Abbey of Arbroath. David Beaton, the future cardinal, became commendator of that abbey in 1524. On the 10th of May 1525, Beaton, as Abbot of Arbroath, directed to James Strachan of Monboddoo, and others, a precept for infefting John Wishart as heir to his father, James Wishart of Pitarrow, in the mill and lands of Conveth (Laurencekirk), held by the abbey in chief.

[81] This precept is not, according to usage, sealed with the official seal of the abbey, but with the abbot’s private seal, on which his family arms are engraved. Beaton also attaches his signature, ²¹⁸ thus:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Beaton". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and characteristic of the early 16th century.

On the 9th of February 1531, John Wishart of Pitarrow obtained a gift of the ward of the lands of Wester Glenburny and others in the county of Kincardine, which belonged to the late James Wishart of Pitarrow, and Elizabeth Learmont his spouse, conjunct fiar ²¹⁹ of it — the dues of which were in the king’s hand.²²⁰

²¹⁴ Clerk of the Justiciary Court.

²¹⁵ Acta Parl. Scot., vol. ii.

²¹⁶ Reg. Mag. Sig., lib. xviii., No. 44.

²¹⁷ Colonel Leslie’s *Family of Leslie*, vol. ii., p. 150.

²¹⁸ Fraser’s *Earls of Southesk*, pp. lxv., lxvi.

²¹⁹ *Fiar*: a person who has the legal right of ownership of an estate, even if they do not currently possess it.

²²⁰ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. ix., fol. 76.

John Wishart died unmarried, or without issue. James, his younger brother, styled “of Carnebege” in the parish of Fordoun,²²¹ married and had four sons: John, James, Alexander, and George; and two daughters, Margaret and Christina.

Margaret Wishart married, first, William Gardyne, younger of Burrofield, and, secondly, in 1560, Alexander Tullo, son of William Tullo, younger of Craignestoun.²²² Christina Wishart married John Wedderburn, burghess of Dundee. On the 29th of May 1571, sasine ²²³ was granted on a precept by Patrick Kinnaird of that ilk, in favour of Christina Wishart, relict (widow) of the late John Wedderburn, burghess of Dundee, in liferent;²²⁴ and to George Wishart, “armigero crucis christianissimi regis Galliae;” ²²⁵ her brother, of an annual rent of £20 Scots, furth (a fourth) of the corn mill of Kinnaird.²²⁶ Alexander, third son of John Wishart of Pitarrow, married Marion, daughter of Alexander Falconer of Halkerton. On the 2nd of October 1556, he received precept of a royal charter for confirming him in a portion of the lands of Halkerton, granted him by Alexander Falconer.²²⁷

[82] He was, on the 1st of February 1562, appointed captain and keeper “of the houses, place, and fortalice (small fort) of Badgenocht and bailie of the lands, barony, and bounds of the same.” ²²⁸ From Sir John Wishart, his eldest brother, he received, on the 24th of May 1566, precept of a charter of the lands of Carnebeg,²²⁹ in the county of Kincardine, which lands were further destined to his brother George.²³⁰

George Wishart, fourth son of John Wishart of Pitarrow, obtained military employment in France. On the 14th of June 1565, sasine proceeded on a charter granted by John Wallace of Craigie, in favour of “George Wischart, brother-german of John Wischart of Pitarrow, *armiger crucis regis Gallicae.*” ²³¹ By this charter George Wishart received the lands of Westerdoid, in the lordship of Murlachewod and shire of Forfar. The charter is dated the 5th of June 1565, and on behalf of George Wishart, sasine is granted in the hands of his attorney, described as “George Wishart of Drymme.” George Wishart of Westerdoid died unmarried. On the 5th of March 1573, he nominated his sister, Christina Wishart, relict of John Wedderburn, his cessioner, or residuary legatee.²³²

²²¹ *ib.*, vol. xxvii., fol. 51.

²²² Matrimonial Contract in Register of Deeds, dated 8th February 1560.

²²³ *Sasine*: the act of giving legal possession of feudal property.

²²⁴ *Liferent*: In Scots law, this refers to a legal right to receive the benefits, use, or income of a property for the duration of one's lifetime without owning the underlying capital.

²²⁵ *The squire of the cross of the most Christian king of Gaul.*

²²⁶ Protocol Register of Thomas Ireland, Notary Public, in the Town-Clerk's Office, Dundee.

²²⁷ Reg. Sec Sig., vol. xxviii., fol. 94*b*.

²²⁸ *ib.*, vol. xxxviii., fol. 31.

²²⁹ Members of the family of Wishart, chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits, resided at Carnebeg, in the parish of Fordoun, till the middle of the eighteenth century; they are represented by the Rev. James Wishart, pastor of Toxteth Church, Liverpool.

²³⁰ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxxv., fol. 35.

²³¹ *Squire of the French King's Cross.*

²³² Protocol Book of Thomas Ireland, in Town-Clerk's Office, Dundee.

John, eldest son of James Wishart of Carnebeg, and grandson of the justice-clerk, succeeded John Wishart, his uncle, in the lands and barony of Pitarrow. On the 3rd of October 1545, he received a gift of the non-entries of the lands of Staddokmure (otherwise Reidheuch), and others in the county of Kincardine, which were held by Queen Mary, by reason of nonentry, since the death of umquhile Strachan.²³³ On the 24th of March 1553, a precept of charter was granted to John Wishart, “son and heir of the late James Wishart,” of the lands of Bathaggartics and others, in the lordship of Mar.²³⁴

[83] John Wishart engaged in legal studies, like his grandfather. While prosecuting these studies at Edinburgh, it is believed that, through Learmont of Balcomie, he became acquainted with Crichton of Brunstone, Norman Leslie, and others, who were concerned in a plot against Cardinal Beaton. In connection with this conspiracy, in April 1544 he acted as messenger between Crichton and the English court. After succeeding to the paternal estates in 1545, he seems to have withdrawn from public affairs till 1557, when he joined the Earls of Argyle and Glencairn, Lord James Stuart, Prior of St. Andrews, and John Erskine of Dun, in dispatching a communication to John Knox at Geneva, inviting him to return to Scotland, and assuring him of general support. This communication was dated the 10th of March 1557; and upon receiving it Knox at once undertook his journey homeward. But at Dieppe, which he reached in October, he was informed by other correspondents that the zeal of the Scottish Reformers had considerably waned, and that few would imperil their fortunes by attempting a change. Knox was much disheartened, and determined to return to Geneva. Before leaving Dieppe he addressed letters of exhortation to the leading Reformers, and private communications to the Lairds of Pitarrow and Dun.

On receiving Knox’s private letters, Wishart and Erskine called together the leading Reformers, and urged them to immediate action. The result was that, on the 3rd of December 1557, that memorable bond was framed by which the Reformers confederated under the name of the *Congregation*, each becoming bound to seek the destruction of the Romish Church.²³⁵ Wishart continued one of the leading members of the Congregation. When they met at Perth on the 24th of May 1559, to devise measures for resisting the queen regent, Wishart and Erskine were deputed to assure the royal envoys that [84] while they cherished no disloyal intentions, they would firmly assert their privileges. On the 4th of June, Wishart and Erskine attended a conference at St. Andrews, with the Earl of Argyle and Lord James Stuart, who acted as representatives of the regent. The result of this conference was favourable to the Reformed cause, and Knox at once commenced his public exposure of Romish error. The first day’s preaching at St. Andrews was followed by a popular insurrection, and the wrecking of the Dominican and Franciscan monasteries.

The queen regent, having at length consented to grant freedom of worship to the body of the Congregation, Wishart joined a deputation in opening with her negotiations for this purpose; but the crafty princess withdrew her pledge. Wishart, with others, resented her duplicity by subscribing a manifesto declaring that she had forfeited her office as regent. He attended the

²³³ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xix., fol. 43. *Umquhile*: deceased, or the former.

²³⁴ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxvii., fol. 51.

²³⁵ Knox’s *History*, edit. 1846, vol. i., pp. 267-274, 337-350. 361-451.

convention at Berwick in February 1560, when the Duke of Norfolk, on behalf of Queen Elizabeth, agreed to support the Congregation against the power of France.²³⁶ And when the English army reached Edinburgh in April, with the intention of expelling the French, he joined the nobility and barons in hailing their advent, and pledging cordial cooperation.²³⁷

In the Parliament held at Edinburgh on the 1st of August 1560, John Wishart of Pitarrow is named as one of the commissioners of burghs. By this Parliament, on the 17th of August, the Confession of Faith was ratified.²³⁸ The government of the State was entrusted to twenty-four persons, eight of whom were to be chosen by the queen, and six by the nobility. Wishart was one of those selected by the nobles.²³⁹

With a view to the surrender by the Romish clergy, of the third portion of their revenues, Wishart was appointed in 1561, along with certain officers of state, to prepare a valuation of ecclesiastical property.²⁴⁰ [85] On the 8th of February 1561-2, when the Earl of Murray (Lord James Stuart) was married to Agnes Keith, daughter of the Earl Marischal, he was, along with nine other notable persons, honoured with knighthood.²⁴¹ On the 15th of February he was appointed Comptroller and Collector-General of Teinds.²⁴² In this capacity he became paymaster of the Reformed clergy. These bitterly complained of their scanty incomes, and Knox relates that the saying prevailed, "The good Laird of Pitarro was an earnest professor of Christ; but the mekle (great) Devil receives the Comptroller."²⁴³

At the battle of Corrichie fought on the 5th of November 1562, between the followers of the rebel Earl of Huntly and the royal troops, Sir John Wishart was present and highly distinguished himself.²⁴⁴ In the Parliament held at Edinburgh, on the 4th of June 1563, he was appointed with others to decide as to those who should have the benefit of the Act of Oblivion, for offences committed from the 6th of March 1558 to the 1st of September 1560.²⁴⁵

Actively employed in the State, Sir John Wishart did not overlook family affairs. On the 21st of December 1557, he and his wife, Janet Falconer, received a third part of the lands of Halkerton. On the 21st of September 1563, he had the precept of a charter of the lands of Enrowglass, in the lordship of Badenoch and sheriffdom of Inverness.²⁴⁶ On the 23rd of January 1564 he received a charter of the lands of Glenmuick, Assynt, Glentanner, Inchmarno, Tullych, Ballater, and others in the county of Aberdeen.²⁴⁷ By a letter under the

²³⁶ Knox's *History*, edit. 1846, vol. ii., pp. 45-52.

²³⁷ *ib.*, pp. 61-64.

²³⁸ Acta Parl. Scot., vol. ii., p. 526.

²³⁹ Keith's *History*, p. 152.

²⁴⁰ Knox's *History*, vol. ii., p. 304.

²⁴¹ Knox's *History*, vol. ii., p. 314, note by Mr. David Laing.

²⁴² Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxxi., Nos. 3 and 5. [Teinds: a tenth part of the produce of land, contributed as a tax for the support of the church and clergy.](#)

²⁴³ Knox's *History*, vol. ii., pp. 310, 311.

²⁴⁴ *ib.*, vol. ii., p. 356.

²⁴⁵ Acta Parl. Scot., vol. ii., p. 536. [The Act of Oblivion: general pardon for those involved in the English Civil Wars.](#)

²⁴⁶ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxxii., No. 4.

²⁴⁷ *ib.*. No. 131b.

Privy Seal he was granted, on the 24th of May 1565, the reversion of the lands and barony of Rothiemurchus, in the regality of Spynie and sheriffdom of Inverness, escheat by the treason of the Lord Gordon.²⁴⁸ On the 28th of July 1565, he and his wife obtained a precept of charter, in conjunct fee, of the lands of Easter and Wester Balfour and Incharbak, in the county of Kincardine.²⁴⁹

[86] Having joined the Earl of Murray in opposing the marriage of Queen Mary with Lord Darnley, Sir John was denounced a rebel, and obliged to seek refuge in England. Consequent on his forfeiture, the rents owing him by Mr. George Gordon of Balderny were granted to Mr. John Gordon on the 26th of October 1565,²⁵⁰ and a debt of 300 merks owing him by Captain Alexander Crichton of Hallyard was presented to the debtor.²⁵¹ By a letter under the Privy Seal, Walter Wood of Balbirgenocht obtained the rents of his lands of Pitarrow, Easter Pitarrow, Wester Mill of Petreny, Pettingardnave, Little Carnebeg, Reidhall, Easter Wottoun, Wester Wottoun, Easter Balfour, Wester Balfour, Incheharbertt, Gallowhilton, and Crofts of Kincardine, with the lands of Glentanner and Braes of Mar.²⁵²

Sir John Wishart returned to Scotland after the slaughter of David Rizzio. That event took place on the 9th of March 1566. On the 21st day of the same month, he obtained the royal pardon for “participating with the Duke of Chatelherault and Arran, Lord Hamilton, in holding the castles of Hamilton and Draffan on the 30th of September last.”²⁵³ On the 24th of May 1566, he granted a precept of charter of the lands of Carnebeg, in the county of Kincardine, to his brother-german, Alexander Wishart of Cosvell, and Marion Falconer, his wife, whom failing, to George Wishart, his brother-german.²⁵⁴

In 1567 Sir John Wishart received a royal precept for confirming a charter of alienation²⁵⁵ by James, Earl of Murray, of the lands of Cragane, Cambusnakist, Auchindryne, Auchquhi Hater, Kyndrocht, and others in the lordship of Braemar.²⁵⁶ The right of Sir John to the possession of these lands was disputed by the Earl of Mar, who brought his claim under the consideration of Parliament.

[87] On the 29th of July 1567, the Estates of Parliament recommended a private settlement.²⁵⁷

In May 1567, Sir John joined the confederacy against the Earl of Bothwell. He was, on the 19th of November of the same year, appointed an extraordinary Lord of Session.²⁵⁸ In 1568

²⁴⁸ *ib.* vol. xxxiii, No. 48.

²⁴⁹ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxxiii., No. 95*b*.

²⁵⁰ *ib.*, No. 115*b*.

²⁵¹ *ib.*, No. 122.

²⁵² *ib.*, vol. xxxv., No. 45*b*.

²⁵³ *ib.*, No. 12*b*.

²⁵⁴ *ib.*, No. 35. Brother-german refers to a full brother, meaning a brother born to the same parents.

²⁵⁵ *Charter of Alienation*: a formal legal document granting the transfer of land or rights from one party to another, typically confirmed by royal authority.

²⁵⁶ *ib.* vol. xxxviii., No 31.

²⁵⁷ Acta Parl. Scot., vol. iii., pp. 476-478.

²⁵⁸ Pitmedden MS.

he accompanied the Regent Murray to York, and gave his sanction to the charges preferred against Queen Mary.²⁵⁹

After the battle of Langside, and the assumption of the regency by the Duke of Chatelherault (formerly known as the Regent Arran), Sir John Wishart attached himself to the duke's party in opposition to his former friend and patron, the Regent Murray. In the cause of Queen Mary, he joined Sir William Kirkaldy in the Castle of Edinburgh, and became constable of the fort. He was one of eight persons by whose assistance Kirkaldy undertook to hold the castle against all assailants.²⁶⁰ When Kirkaldy capitulated in May 1573, he became a prisoner in the hands of the Regent Morton. On the 11th of July, he was denounced a rebel, and his lands and goods were conferred on his nephew, "Mr. John Wishart, son to Mr. James Wishart of Balfeith."²⁶¹ He was also deprived of his office of judge. On the 18th of January 1574, he was re-appointed an extraordinary Lord of Session.²⁶² He died on the 25th of September 1576.²⁶³ Sir John married Janet, sister of Sir Alexander Falconer of Halkerton, but had no children.

James Wishart, second son of John Wishart of Pitarrow, and brother of Sir John Wishart, received on the 14th of April 1545, from Cardinal Beaton as Commendator of Arbroath, a precept for infefting²⁶⁴ him and Elizabeth Wood,²⁶⁵ his spouse, [88] in the town and lands of Balfeith, in the barony of Redhall, regality of Arbroath, and shire of Kincardine. The precept bears that the lands formerly belonged to John Wishart of Pitarrow, and were resigned by him into the cardinal's hands; it is dated at the monastery of Arbroath, and subscribed by the cardinal and twenty-one of the brethren convened in chapter. It is impressed with the round seal of the cardinal, and counter-sealed with his privy seal; it also bears the common seal of the abbey.²⁶⁶

James Wishart of Balfeith died in April 1575. In his will, which was executed on the 24th of April of that year, he names three sons, John, James, and Alexander, and five daughters, Elspit, Christian, Jane, Isobel,²⁶⁷ and Helen. His brother, Alexander, styled "of Carnebeg," subscribes as one of the witnesses, and Sir John Wishart, his eldest brother, is constituted "oversman" of his executors.²⁶⁸

John Wishart, eldest son of James Wishart of Balfeith, succeeded to the lands and barony of Pitarrow on the death of his uncle, Sir John Wishart, in September 1576. In a Parliament held

²⁵⁹ Memoirs of Sir James Melvil, p. 186.

²⁶⁰ Spottiswoode's *History*, Edin., 1851, vol. ii., p. 193; Melvil's Memoirs, p. 241.

²⁶¹ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xli., No. 90b.

²⁶² Brunton and Haig's *Senators of the College of Justice*, p. 138.

²⁶³ Knox's *History*, ed. 1846, vol. ii., p. 311, note by Mr. David Laing.

²⁶⁴ *Infefting: the legal act of giving symbolical possession of land to a person.*

²⁶⁵ This gentlewoman was probably a daughter of David Wood of Craig, who was Comptroller from 1538 to 1546 (Sir John Scot's *Staggering State*, Edin., 1872, p. 111, note by Goodal).

²⁶⁶ Fraser's *Earls of Southesk*, pp. lxv., lxvi.

²⁶⁷ Isobel Wishart, Prioress of the Grey Sisters at Dundee, received on the 16th of May 1566 the gift of a nun's portion, "with chalmer, habit, silver, fire, candle, and all other things necessary within the Abbey of North Berwick" (Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxxv., p. 46).

²⁶⁸ Edin. Com. Reg., Testaments, vol. iv.

at Stirling in 1578, of which he was a member, John Wishart of Pitarrow was nominated one of the commissioners for examining the “Buik (book) of the Policy of the Kirk,” with a view to its public ratification.²⁶⁹ On the 16th of February 1585, he was served heir to Sir John Wishart in the lands of Cairnton and others, and in Fordoun, a free burgh of barony.²⁷⁰ In 1587 he awakened a legal process against the Countess of Murray “for execution of a decret of warrandice”²⁷¹ upon the lands of Strathtie and Braemar, granted to Sir John by the Regent Earl of Murray.

[89] In 1592 he was allowed by Parliament to proceed against the heirs of the Earl of Murray. But at a Parliament held at Edinburgh on the 8th of June 1594, the proceedings were arrested on the grounds that the earl was under age, that the documents on which his defence rested were burned at Donibristle when the late earl was murdered, and that the estates of the earldom were heavily encumbered.²⁷²

In 1592 Sir John Wishart of Pitarrow “subscribed the band anent (regarding) religion at Aberdeen.” In the same year he was appointed one of the Earl Marischal’s deputies, to apprehend the Earl of Huntly and others, for the burning of Donibristle, and murder of the Earl of Murray. He married Jean, daughter of William Douglas, ninth Earl of Angus. A charter under the Great Seal, “Domino Joanni Wishart de Pittarro et Doming Jeanne Douglas ejus spousae baroniarum de Pittarro, Reidhall, etc.,”²⁷³ is dated the 7th of April 1603. Of this marriage were born four sons: John, James, William, and Alexander; and a daughter, Elizabeth, who married Sir William Forbes, Bart. (baronet) of Monymusk. Sir John Wishart died at an advanced age before the 30th of April 1607. According to Sir John Scot, he lived to “a good age in good reputation.”²⁷⁴

John Wishart, eldest son of Sir John Wishart of Pitarrow, had at the university as his companion, John Gordon, afterwards Dean of Salisbury. This divine dedicated to him in 1603 his “*Assertiones Theologicae*,”²⁷⁵ in these commendatory terms:

“*Nobili & generoso juueni JOANNI SOPHOCARDIO Pittarroensi,
Joannes Gordonius Britanno-Scotus, S. P. D.*”

[90] “*Hisce diebus elapsis (Sophocardi amicissime) dū animi oblectandi gratiâ musaeolum nostrum inuises, de controuersijs religionis nostri saeculi agere caepisti, & argumenta in medium proponere quibus nituntur nostrates pontificis Romani emissarij animum tuum ad Romana deliria allicere, quae pro tenuitate mea diluere sategi hinc mihi in animum venit breuiusculas assertiones ex lucubrationib. nostris Theologicis colligere, per quas rationibus solidissimis euincimus Episcopos & doctores pontificios in Gentilium, Arrianorum,*

²⁶⁹ Acta Parl. Scot., vol. iii., p. 105.

²⁷⁰ Inq. Spec., Kincardine, No. 4.

²⁷¹ *Warrandice*: a legal obligation or guarantee to provide compensation if a title or right is found to be defective.

²⁷² Acta Parl. Scot., vol. lv., p. 80.

²⁷³ “*To Lord John Wishart of Pittar and Dominga Jeanne Douglas his wife, the baronies of Pittar, Reidhall,*” etc.

²⁷⁴ Scot’s *Staggering State*, Edin., 1872, p. III.

²⁷⁵ The full title is, “*Assertiones Theologicae pro vera vers Ecclesia: Nota, quae est solius Dei Adoratio: contra falsae Ecclesiae Creaturaram Adorationem.* Rupell, 1603.” The work is extremely rare. A copy is preserved in the Bodleian Library.

Nestorianorum, & Eutychianorum errores blasphemus dilapsos esse, adeò vt externae ordinationis Episcopalis character, quem superbè jactitant, per doctrinae corruptelam irritus & ianis euasit; ac proinde nullam verae Ecclesiae notam reliquam penes aulae Romanae adultores permansisse. Tu verò pro ingenitâ, animi tui sinceritate & zelo gloriae Dei efflagitasti vt has easdem assertiones in publicam Ecclesiae Dei vtilitatem emitterem, vt illis adolescentium nostratum animi praemuniantur, tanquam amuleto contra Idolomaniam pontificiam, quae passim grassatur, & innumeram mortalium multitudinem ad animarum naufragium impellit, dū splendore honorum & diuitiarum fulgore mentis oculos illis perstringit, vt caduca bona solidis & aeternis anteferant. Accipe ergo, mi Sophocardi, has assertiones quibus conficiendis ansam praebuisti, vt non tibi solum, sed & Christianis omnibus qui seruari expetunt prosint: & memoriam Georgij Sophocardij patris tui magni in scrinio pectoris reconde; qui pro veritate Christianâ fortiter strenuèq̄ dimicans, impiâ pseudo Episcoporum condemnatione, qui tunc rerum potiebantur apud Scotos, flammis olim traditus, nunc fruitur splendore praesentiae Christi, pro cuius gloria propagandâ nee facultatibus nec vitae pepercit. Vale.”

This dedication may be rendered thus:

*“To the noble and excellent young gentleman, John Wishart of
the House of Pitarrow, John Gordon, a Scottish Briton,
presents a hearty salutation.*

“In former days, dearest Wishart, when you attended our debating society, you discussed the religious controversies of the time, and reviewed the arguments by which emissaries of the priesthood sought to render attractive the foolish doctrines of the Romish Church. These arguments, though with less ability, I have endeavoured to expound. And it has occurred to me to select from our theological conversations some brief propositions by which, on substantial grounds, [91] “we demonstrate that the bishops and learned men of Rome had lapsed into the degrading errors of the heathens, and of the Arians, Nestorians, and disciples of Eutychus; so that episcopal ordination, in which they rejoice, has through the corruption of their doctrines become foolish and absurd. In the present aspect of the papacy those corrupt persons have left no trace of the true Church. Through kindly feeling, and in your zeal for God’s glory, you have urged me to publish these propositions — so that our youths might be fortified against papal idolatry, which is spreading everywhere, and wrecking men’s souls, while dazzling them with the glare of worldly honour, and the fleeting splendour of terrestrial opulence. Accept these propositions, originated in your own suggestions, dear Wishart, so that they may profit not only yourself, but all who desire help. And in the treasury of your heart, cherish I pray you, the memory of your great paternal uncle, George Wishart. After faithfully upholding the cause of Christian truth against false bishops, then all-powerful in Scotland, was betrayed to the flames, and who now rejoices in the bright presence of Christ, for the maintenance of whose glorious doctrines he gave up his life.”

About the year 1582, John Wishart married a daughter of Forrester of Carden, Stirlingshire — a union which, according to Scot of Scotstarvet,²⁷⁶ was most obnoxious to his father. Of the marriage were born two children, a son and daughter. The daughter, whose Christian name was Margaret, married Sir David Lindsay of Edzell and Glenesk, who had in June 1605 a

²⁷⁶ Sir John Scot records some gossip on the subject of this union, which it is undesirable to reproduce (Scot’s *Staggering State*, ed. 1872, p. 111).

desperate encounter with his brother-in-law, the young laird of Pitarrow, at the Salt Tron of Edinburgh. They fought a whole day, and one Guthrie, a follower of Wishart, was killed, others on both sides being wounded. On account of this public outrage, the fathers of the two combatants were imprisoned by the chancellor, Archbishop Spottiswoode, for not putting restraint upon their sons.²⁷⁷ John Wishart's son predeceased his father, unmarried. His Christian name is not certainly known.²⁷⁸

[92] John Wishart was, on the 30th of April 1607, served heir to his father in the baronies of Pitarrow and Reidhall.²⁷⁹ He was afterwards knighted. Having become deeply involved, he sold his estates in 1615 to his younger brother James. On this event his wife retired to England, where she was maintained by her relative, Lady Annandale.²⁸⁰ Sir John proceeded to Ireland, where he obtained a grant of some escheated lands in county Fermanagh. Some curious details respecting his career in Ireland are supplied by Father Hay in his memoir of James Spottiswoode, Bishop of Clogher.²⁸¹ According to Hay, Sir John held "twenty-four towns or tates"²⁸² of Bishop Spottiswoode's lands, for which he agreed to pay £36 of yearly rent. The rent being withheld, the bishop procured a warrant of distress, and thereupon arrested Sir John's cattle. This procedure being made public, Lord Balfour of Glenawly, a Scottish settler in the county of Fermanagh,²⁸³ to whom the bishop was obnoxious, obtained letters of reprisal on Sir John's behalf, and with a powerful force, seized cattle belonging to the bishop. Some time afterwards the bishop's servants attempted to distrain²⁸⁴ the horses of Lord Balfour, on a claim for reset, when a scuffle ensued, in which Sir John Wemyss, Balfour's son-in-law, fell mortally wounded. By Lord Balfour, the slaughter of his relative was reported to the authorities in Dublin Castle, and the bishop was charged with manslaughter. He was tried in the Court of King's Bench in November 1626, and honourably acquitted.

From a letter of Sir John Wishart, contained in Bishop Spottiswoode's Memoirs, it would appear that Lord Balfour, though retaining his hostility to the bishop, ceased to associate with Sir John.

[93] The editor of the bishop's memoirs in the *Spottiswoode Miscellany* expresses an opinion that Sir John, whose manner was boastful and absurd, suggested to Sir Walter Scott the character of Captain Craigenfelt in the "Bride of Lammermoor."²⁸⁵

²⁷⁷ Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*, vol. iii, p. 61.

²⁷⁸ The Christian name of young Wishart was William or Walter; the initials W. W., with the date 1622, are inscribed on a panel which formerly belonged to the Wishart family pew in the parish church of Fordoun (Jervise's *Angus and Mearns*, p. 387).

²⁷⁹ *Inquisitiones Speciales*, Kincardine, No. 21.

²⁸⁰ Scot's *Staggering State*, p. 111.

²⁸¹ *Spottiswoode Miscellany*, vol. i., pp. 110-136.

²⁸² *Tate*: an obsolete unit of land measurement equivalent to about 30 or 60 acres.

²⁸³ James Balfour, second son of Sir James Balfour of Pittendriech, and brother of the first Lord Balfour of Burley, was created, 6th July 1619, Lord Balfour, Baron of Glenawly, in the county of Fermanagh.

²⁸⁴ *Distrain*: to seize someone's property in order to compel the payment of a debt or performance of an obligation.

²⁸⁵ *Spottiswoode Miscellany*, vol. i., p. 134.

James Wishart, second son of Sir John Wishart and Jean Douglas, having acquired the lands of Pitarrow from his elder brother, had a charter thereto on the 12th of December 1615. He also acquired the lands of Glenfarquhar and Monboddo. His affairs having become embarrassed, about the year 1631 he sold the lands of Pitarrow, with the lands of Carnebeg, Woodtown, and the mill of Conveth, to David, Lord Carnegie, for the sum of 59,000 merks, or £3277, 15s. 6-2/3 d. sterling. In the instrument of sale, "Sir John Wishart, sometime of Pitarrow "is named as still living."²⁸⁶ In a state of poverty, James Wishart proceeded to Ireland; he became a captain in the king's service, and perished in battle. He left no male issue. His wife, Margaret Bickerton,²⁸⁷ by whom he obtained a considerable fortune, survived him, and resided in Edinburgh, supported by her relations.

William, third son of Sir John Wishart of Pitarrow, and his wife, Jean Douglas, entered the University of King's College, Aberdeen, in 1606, and graduated in 1612.²⁸⁸ He was admitted coadjutor in the parochial charge of Fettercairn, Kincardineshire, the 24th of April 1611, and was afterwards translated to Minto.²⁸⁹ He returned to Fettercairn in 1618, and in May 1630 was transferred to South Leith. In 1634 he sat as a member of the Court of High Commission, and was admitted a burghess and guild-brother of Edinburgh on the 27th of July 1636.

[94] As an opponent of the Covenant, he was deposed from the pastoral office on the 9th of June 1639, and having supported Charles I in the assertion of his prerogative, was forced to leave Scotland. He resided several years in Cornwall, and there died. He published in 1633 an "Exposition of the Lord's Prayer," 18mo; and in 1642 "Immanuel," a poem. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Keith of Phesdo, who was served heir to her father on the 25th of April 1634. Of this marriage a son was born, John, who was killed fighting on the king's side, at the battle of Edgehill, the 23rd of October 1642.²⁹⁰

Alexander, fourth son of Sir John Wishart and Jean Douglas, entered the University of King's College, Aberdeen, in 1626. He married Catherine, daughter of the Rev. Robert Kerr, minister of Linton, and had a son, William.

William Wishart, son of Alexander Wishart and Catherine Kerr, graduated in the University of Edinburgh in 1645. In August 1649, he was admitted minister of Kinneil,²⁹¹ Linlithgowshire. Joining the Protesters, he was a member of the Dissenting Presbytery from the 6th of August 1651 to the 11th of February 1659. On the 15th of September 1660, he was ordered by the Committee of Estates to confine himself to his chamber, and in another five days was committed to prison at Edinburgh. After an imprisonment of thirteen months, partly in Stirling Castle, he was restored to freedom, on the petition of the Presbytery of Linlithgow.

²⁸⁶ Fraser's *Earls of Southesk*, p. lxxvii. By the representative of Lord Carnegie, the estate of Pitarrow was sold in 1831 to Alexander Crombie of Phesdo, to whose family it still belongs.

²⁸⁷ *Pitarrow Writs*, quoted by Mr. Fraser in his "Earls of Southesk."

²⁸⁸ *Fasti Aberdonensis*.

²⁸⁹ The term "translate" in the context of the clergy of the Scottish Church refers to the formal movement or appointment of a minister from one parish or position to another within the Church of Scotland.

²⁹⁰ Scott's *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, vol. iii., p. 866; and vol. i., p. 99.

²⁹¹ This parish is now united to Borrowstounness.

Being sequestered for refusing to disown the “Remonstrance,”²⁹² he was deprived of his stipend which the Estates of Parliament, however, by an Act passed on the 29th of January 1661, granted to his wife. He was intercommuned by the Privy Council on the 6th of August 1675, on the charge of keeping conventicles, or preaching without public sanction. On the 5th of February 1685, sentence of banishment to his Majesty’s plantations was pronounced against him for his refusing the Test; [95] but he was relieved on granting a bond to appear when called upon. He afterwards resided at Leith; and when the Toleration Act was passed, he ministered to a congregation in that place. He died in February 1692, about the age of sixty-seven.²⁹³ He had married Christian, daughter of Richard Burne, of the family of Burne of Middlemill, Fifeshire, a magistrate of Linlithgow. Of this marriage were born three sons — George, James, and William.

George Wishart, eldest son of the Rev. William Wishart, minister of Kinneil, obtained a commission in the army, and became lieutenant-colonel of the Dragoon Guards. He purchased the estate of Cliftonhall, Edinburghshire. A royal warrant, dated the 19th of April 1700, authorised a patent to be prepared, conferring on him a baronetcy of Scotland, with the remainder to whomever his heirs might be. This honour was conferred on the 17th of June 1706, with the limitation originally designed. Sir George Wishart, Bart., married, as his first wife, Anne, daughter of Barclay of Colairney, Fifeshire, by whom he had a daughter, Margaret, who espoused David Stuart of Fettercairn. On the death of Sir George, which took place prior to August 1722, her eldest son succeeded to the baronetcy of Wishart, and became known as Sir William Stuart, Bart. This branch of the Wishart family is now represented by Harriet Williamina, only child of the late Sir John Hepburn-Stuart Forbes, Bart. of Pitsligo, and wife of Baron Clinton.

Sir George Wishart, Bart., married secondly, Fergusia M’Cubbin, of a Galloway family, by whom he had two daughters, Fergusia and Cordelia. By a deed of entail,²⁹⁴ dated 4th of January 1718, he conveyed his estate of Cliftonhall to himself and his male heirs, whom failing, to his daughter Fergusia. On the death of Sir George Wishart, without male heirs, Fergusia Wishart expeded²⁹⁵ a general service as heiress of provision to her father, whereby she took up the unexecuted procuratory of resignation, and obtained a charter from the superior of the estate of Cliftonhall, conform to an instrument of sasine.²⁹⁶

[96] In 1727, she married George Lockhart of Carnwath, Lanarkshire. She is now represented by Alexander Dundas Ross Wishart Baillie Cochrane of Lamington, M.P. for the Isle of Wight.

Cordelia Wishart, younger daughter of Sir George Wishart, Bart., by his second marriage, married William Sinclair of Rosslyn; she died without surviving issue.

²⁹² A document addressed by the General Assembly of February 1645 to Charles I, reflecting on his conduct in the severest terms.

²⁹³ *Fasti Eccl. Scot.*, vol. i., p. 172.

²⁹⁴ A deed of entail is a legal document that establishes restrictions on the inheritance of property, ensuring that it can only be passed down to specific heirs, typically direct descendants.

²⁹⁵ *Expede*: the process of completing and issuing legal documents related to inheritance, ensuring that the rights and properties of heirs are properly managed and transferred according to the law.

²⁹⁶ Particular Register of Sasines, 10th of December 1726.

James, second son of the Rev. William Wishart, minister of Kinneil, entered the Royal Navy, and in 1703 became Admiral of the White. In 1708, and from 1712 to 1714, he was a Lord of the Admiralty. He commanded a fleet in the Mediterranean, and was knighted by Queen Anne. He died without issue in May 1723, leaving a fortune of £20,000 to his nephew, William Wishart, Principal of the University of Edinburgh.

William, third son of the Rev. William Wishart, minister of Kinneil, studied at the universities of Utrecht and Edinburgh, graduating at the latter in 1680. In 1684 he suffered imprisonment on a charge of denying the king's authority. On the 10th of August 1691, he was ordained minister of the first charge of Leith. His settlement was resisted by the adherents of Mr. Charles Kay, the non-jurant incumbent of the second charge. On the following day he preached under the protection of an armed "guard." He was translated to the Tron Church, Edinburgh, in 1707, and in 1710 was appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh, an office he held along with his parochial charge. He received the degree of D.D., and was on five occasions chosen Moderator of the General Assembly. He published two volumes of discourses, and greatly excelled in his public ministrations. He married Janet, daughter of Major William Murray, brother of John Murray of Touchadam, Stirlingshire. The 8th of June 1714 Janet was served heir-portioner of her aunt, Mrs. Anne Cunningham of Drumquassel; she died on the 30th of June 1744. Principal Wishart had died on the 11th of June 1729, in his sixty-ninth year.²⁹⁷ [97] He was father of two sons, William and George.

George, younger son of Principal William Wishart, studied at the University of Edinburgh, and there graduated the 27th of May 1719. He was in June 1726 ordained minister of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, and translated to the Tron Church in July 1730. By the Commission of the General Assembly he was, in 1743, appointed one of their delegates to procure an Act of Parliament for establishing the Ministers' Widows Fund. In May 1746, he was elected principal clerk of the General Assembly, and in 1748 was chosen Moderator. He received the degree of D.D. in 1759, and in 1765 was appointed chaplain in ordinary to the king, and one of the Deans of the Chapel Royal. Esteemed as a preacher, he was beloved for his amiable manners. He died the 12th of June 1785, aged eighty-three.²⁹⁸ He married Anne, daughter of John Campbell of Orchard, cousin and heir of Sir James Campbell, Bart., of Ardkinglass, by whom he had, with other daughters who died unmarried, Janet, who married Major-General Beckwith, and Jane, who married the Baron von Westphalen. Dr. George Wishart died the 17th of November 1782, aged seventy-two.

William Wishart, elder son of Principal William Wishart, studied for the Scottish Church, and began his ministry as pastor of the Presbyterian church, Founder's Hall, London. In 1737 he was presented to the New Greyfriars' church, Edinburgh, but his settlement was delayed consequent on a charge of heresy being brought against him by the Presbytery, of which he was acquitted by the General Assembly. He was, in 1737, appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and in 1745 was elected Moderator of the General Assembly. He published sermons and essays, and edited various theological works. He married first, in December 1724 Margaret, daughter of Professor Thomas Haliburton of St. Andrews, and by her, who died the

²⁹⁷ *Fasti Eccl. Scot*, vol. i., pp. 56, 101.

²⁹⁸ *ib.*, pp. 56, 121.

27th of February 1746, had a son, William Thomas; another son, who died in January 1739; [98] and three daughters — Anne, who died in 1819, aged eighty-two; Janet, who married Mr. Maxwell, merchant, Dundee; and Margaret, who married James Macdowall, merchant, Edinburgh. Principal Wishart married, secondly, Frances, daughter of James Deans of Woodhouselee, on the 17th of March 1747. He died the 12th of May 1753. His widow married Dr. John Scot of Stewartfield, and subsequently John Struther Ker of Littledean, Roxburghshire.²⁹⁹

William Thomas Wishart, only surviving son of Principal William Wishart, possessed the estate of Foxhall, in the county of Linlithgow. He was, on the 30th of March 1768, served heir to his father in the estate of Carsebonny, Stirlingshire. He recorded his arms ³⁰⁰ the 22d of February 1769, as only son of Principal Wishart, and was allowed supporters as heirmale of Pitarrow. He married, in April 1768, Anne, eldest daughter of George Balfour, Writer to the Signet,³⁰¹ and died the 3rd of December 1799, leaving five sons: William, George, Patrick, Archibald, and John Henry.

William, eldest son of William Thomas Wishart of Foxhall and Carsebonny, succeeded his father. He was major in the 15th Regiment of Foot, and died unmarried on the 14th of August 1805. On his death the representation of the House of Pitarrow devolved on his brother George; but the family estates passed by settlement to his next brother, Patrick. George Wishart was served heir-male of Sir George Wishart, Bart., before the Sheriff of Edinburgh, on the 18th of July 1843, and assumed the baronetcy under the erroneous belief that it was destined to heirs-male. He died unmarried before 1860.

Patrick, third son of William Thomas Wishart, was a Writer to the Signet. He sold the family estates. By his wife, Margaret, daughter of Alexander Robertson of Prendergust, Berwickshire, he had three sons: William Thomas, James, and Alexander, and three daughters, Philadelphia-Anne, Hope-Balfour, and Jane. William Thomas, the eldest son, took orders in the English Church; he died at St. John, New Brunswick, without issue. [99] The two younger sons died unmarried. Philadelphia-Anne, the eldest daughter, married Dr. Macnider; and Jane, the third daughter, married Major-General W. J. Gairdner, C.B.,³⁰² Bengal Army, by whom she had Archie Wishart Gairdner, lieutenant 109th Regiment, George Gairdner, in the service of the Hudson Bay Company, James Gairdner, R.N., and others.

Archibald, fourth son of William Thomas Wishart, was a Writer to the Signet, and keeper of the Register of Sasines. He married, but died childless.

John Henry, the fifth son, practised as a surgeon in Edinburgh. He married Louisa, daughter of Major Wilson, R.A., by Martha, daughter of Robert White, M.D., of Bennoch, Fifeshire, and left three sons and two daughters. William, the eldest son, died in India; the second son,

²⁹⁹ Fasti Eccl. Scot., vol. i., pp. 59, 70.

³⁰⁰ Lyon Register.

³⁰¹ A Writer to the Signet is a type of solicitor in Scotland who is a member of the Society of Writers to His Majesty's Signet, which has a history dating back to 1594. They hold specific privileges related to the preparation and authentication of official legal documents.

³⁰² C.B. after a name stands for Companion of the Bath, a title within the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, one of the British orders of chivalry. This honour is typically awarded to senior military officers for distinguished service.

James, was a surgeon in the army, and died at Scutari in 1856. John, the third son, male representative of the House of Wishart of Pitarrow, is now resident in Australia.

Adam Wishart, third son of John Wishart, Sheriff of the Mearns or Kincardineshire, obtained in 1272 a charter of the lands of Ballandarg and Logie, and in 1279 a charter of the lands of Kenny Murchardyn, or Kennyneil, all in the county of Forfar.³⁰³ Gilbert, eldest son of Adam Wishart, swore fealty to Edward I at Elgin on the 24th of July 1296.³⁰⁴ Robert, the second son, was advanced from the office of Archdeacon of Lothian to the Bishopric of Glasgow in 1272, when William Wishart of that see was postulated to St. Andrews. According to the Chartulary of Melrose, he was consecrated at Aberdeen on Sunday before the Feast of the Purification, 1272. He was a Privy Councillor of Alexander III, and on the death of that monarch in 1285 was appointed a Lord of Regency. So long as Edward I evinced a desire to uphold the independence of Scotland, Bishop Wishart gave him countenance. But when the abdication of Baliol revealed the duplicity of the English monarch, he attached himself to the patriotic party, [100] and in 1297 joined the standard of Wallace. Though a churchman, he assumed the coat of mail, and performed military duties in the field.

When Robert the Bruce resolved to assert his right to the Scottish throne in the spring of 1306, Bishop Wishart gave him a cordial support. At his coronation, which took place at Scone on the 27th of March, in the absence of the regalia (which Edward had removed to London), Wishart supplied from his own wardrobe the robes in which King Robert appeared on the occasion. He was present with his sovereign at the battle of Methven, fought on the 18th of June. This engagement having resulted disastrously, Bishop Wishart sought shelter in the castle of Cupar-Fife. There he fell into the hands of the invaders, and being bound in chains, was sent as a prisoner to England. Confined in the castle of Nottingham, he was subjected to much indignity, and narrowly escaped death. He was afterwards detained in Porchester Castle, and the Pope was entreated to make vacant his see and to appoint as his successor a bishop favourable to the English interests.³⁰⁵

After the decisive battle of Bannockburn, Bishop Wishart was, along with Bruce's wife, daughter, sister, and nephew, exchanged for the Earl of Hereford, who had been made a prisoner by the Scots. During his long confinement he had endured many privations, and become blind. He died on the 26th of November 1316, and his remains were deposited in his cathedral church.³⁰⁶ During his episcopate, he forwarded the erection of his cathedral. It was alleged by Edward I that he used timber, which had been allowed him for erecting a steeple to his cathedral, in constructing instruments of war for the reduction of Kirkintilloch Peel, held by the English.³⁰⁷

³⁰³ Dalrymple's *Historical Collections*, 217; Reg. Vet. de Aberd., 332.

³⁰⁴ Ragman Roll, p. 146. [Edward I was also known as Longshanks and the Hammer of the Scots.](#)

³⁰⁵ Rymer's *Foedera*, vol. i., part ii., new ed., p. 996; Prynne; Edward I, p. 1156; Tytler's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1869, 12mo, vol. i., pp. 89, 94.

³⁰⁶ *History of Glasgow*, edited by the Rev. J. S. Gordon, D.D., Glasg., 1871, p. 53.

³⁰⁷ Burton's *History of Scotland*, Edin., 1873, vol. iii., p. 429; Innes's *Sketches of Early Scottish Hist.*, Edin., 1861, p. 50.

John Wishart, nephew of Bishop Robert Wishart, and probably a younger son of Gilbert Wishart of Logie, was sometime Archdeacon of Glasgow. [101] In this capacity he vigorously upheld the national cause, but was unhappily taken prisoner by Edward II, who, on the 6th of April 1310, ordered his removal from the castle of Conway to the city of Chester, and from there to the Tower of London. Released after the battle of Bannockburn, he resumed his duties as archdeacon. In 1319 he was appointed Bishop of Glasgow. He died in 1325.³⁰⁸

To the family of Ballandarg and Logie probably belonged John Wyshert. On the 12th of April 1378, he received a passport from the Privy Council of England, authorising him to proceed from Scotland to the University of Oxford for the purposes of study.³⁰⁹

Alexander Wishart, in 1409, was member of an inquest respecting the lands of Meikle Kenny, in the parish of Kingoldrum, Forfarshire. In a charter of these lands, granted in 1466 by Malcolm, Abbot of Arbroath, is named John, son of John Wishart of Logie.³¹⁰

In 1526 John Wishart succeeded his father Alexander in the lands of Kennyneil.³¹¹ On the 22d of October 1530, he obtained a precept of a charter of the lands of Logie Wishart, Ballandarg Wester, and others.³¹² He had, on the 30th of January 1531, a letter of regress of the lands of Lokarstoun and others.³¹³ On the 31st of July 1538, a protection was granted by James V to John Wishart of Logie Wishart, and Christian Ogilvy, his spouse, with John, Alexander, Katherine, and Christian Wishart, their sons and daughters, and William Wishart, brother to the said John, and to their lands and goods.³¹⁴

On the forfeiture of Archibald, Earl of Angus, superior of Logie Wishart, John Wishart resigned his lands to James V, from whom, on the 29th of May 1540, he received a charter of the lands of Logie Wishart and others.³¹⁵ [102] He further obtained a royal charter, erecting his whole lands into a barony, to be styled “the barony of Wishart,” and a letter, dated the 14th of October 1540, whereby the king’s right to the said barony was discharged.³¹⁶ This branch of the House of Wishart became known henceforth as the *Wisharts of that ilk*.

Alexander Strachan, son of John Wishart of Logie Wishart (named in the protection of James V), died in November 1569, leaving three daughters — Margaret, Isobel, and Janet. By his will, which was confirmed in the Commissary Court of Edinburgh, on the 6th of April 1570, he appointed his brother George Wishart tutor to his daughters.³¹⁷

George Wishart, a younger son of John Wishart of Logie Wishart, became a burghess of Dundee, and engaged in merchandise in that place. In the burgh records of Dundee “George

³⁰⁸ Gordon’s *History of Glasgow*, p. 58.

³⁰⁹ *Rotuli Scotiae*, vol. ii., p. 8a.

³¹⁰ *Reg. Nig. de Aberd.*, pp. 47, 50.

³¹¹ *ib.*

³¹² *Reg. Sec. Sig.*, vol. viii., fol. 195.

³¹³ *ib.*, vol. ix., fol. 72.

³¹⁴ *ib.*, vol. xii., fol. 6.

³¹⁵ *Reg. Sec. Sig.*, vol. xiii., fol. 93.

³¹⁶ *ib.*, vol. xiv., fol. 52b; *Acta Parl. Scot.*, vol. ii., p. 379.

³¹⁷ *Edinburgh Com. Reg., Testaments*, vol. ii.

Vischart” appears eighth in a list of sixteen councillors, dated the 28th of September 1550. On the 24th of September 1553, he is entered last on a list of four bailies.³¹⁸ In the Record of the Convention of Royal Burghs,³¹⁹ held at Dundee on the 28th of September 1555, he is named as one of the commissioners of that burgh. He continued to act as a magistrate in the Burgh Court till 1564.

On the 28th of October 1563, George Wishart obtained a precept of a charter, confirming him in the superiority lands of Kirriemuir, granted to him by his father, “John Wishart of that ilk.”³²⁰ On the 27th of January 1554-5, he granted a discharge to his brother, John Wishart of that ilk, for five hundred merks, in satisfaction of his claim on half the lands of Ballandarg.³²¹ By a royal letter, dated at Stirling, the 7th of March 1568, he received a gift of all the goods which belonged to James Cramond of Auldbar, which had become escheat by his being denounced a rebel.

[103] John Wishart of Logie Wishart died in the year 1574. By his will, dated the 2d of September 1574, he appointed as his executors Marion Gardyne, his spouse, and Thomas Wishart, his second son, with Patrick Ogilvy of Inchmartin as “oversman.” To his daughter Euphan he bequeathed £500; he also made a provision for his daughters, Mirabell, Agnes, and Katherine.³²²

John Wishart, the next baron of Logie Wishart, obtained the honour of knighthood. He had two sons, John and Gilbert, and one daughter. Gilbert Wishart was, on the 30th of November 1614, denounced a rebel for non-payment of a debt of eighty pounds Scots.³²³

On the 30th of October 1629, John Wishart of that ilk was served heir to his uncle, in lands situated in the regality of Kirriemuir; also to his father, Sir John Wishart, in the lands of Kenyneil.³²⁴ He seems to have died unmarried.

Thomas Wishart, probably the same described as “his second son” by John Wishart of Logie Wishart, who died in 1574, obtained a portion of the lands of Inglistoun, in the county of Forfar. On the 11th of January 1612, Thomas Wishart “in Ballindarg” was served heir to his father in a fourth part of the lands of Inglistoun.³²⁵ He married ³²⁶ the only daughter of Sir John Wischart of Logie Wishart, and on the death of his brother John, succeeded to the representation of the House. But the estates were dissipated. Of the marriage of Thomas Wishart “in Ballindarg” to his cousin, a daughter of Sir John Wischart of that ilk, were born

³¹⁸ *Bailie or bailiff: municipal magistrates in Scotland, similar to an alderman.*

³¹⁹ Record of Convention of Royal Burghs, Edin., 1866, 4to, vol. i., p. 10.

³²⁰ Reg. Sec. Sig., vol. xxxii., p. 11b.

³²¹ Wedderburn’s Protocols in the Town-Clerk’s Office, Dundee.

³²² Edinburgh Com. Reg., Testaments, vol. iii.

³²³ Reg. Sec. Sig.

³²⁴ Inq. Spec. Forfar, Nos. 188, 189.

³²⁵ *ib.*, No. 76.

³²⁶ Genealogical MS. in the Lyon Office.

two sons, George ³²⁷ and Gilbert. George Wishart was born about the year 1599. Having prosecuted his theological studies at the University of Edinburgh, and obtained licence as a probationer, he was admitted minister of the parish of Monifieth, Forfarshire in 1624. [104] In 1626 he was translated to the second charge of St. Andrews. Having retired to England in 1637, he was deposed for deserting his charge. Soon afterwards he was appointed lecturer in All Saints church, Newcastle, and in 1640 was presented to St. Nicholas church in the same town. He was deprived of this latter charge by the House of Commons in June 1642. When the Scots took Newcastle in October 1644, he was made a prisoner, and on the charge of corresponding with Royalists, he was committed to the prison of Edinburgh, and there confined in a felon's cell. On his petition, the Estates of Parliament, in January 1645, agreed to support his wife and five children. When the Marquis of Montrose arrived in Edinburgh with his victorious army, he was liberated, after a captivity of seven months. The Marquis appointed him as his private chaplain, and in this capacity he accompanied his benefactor both at home and abroad. At Paris in 1647, he published a narrative of the Marquis's exploits under the following title:

“J. G. De rebus auspiciis serenissimi et potentissimi Caroli, Dei gratia, Magnae Britanniae Regis, etc., sub imperio illustrissimi Jacobi Montisrosarum Marchionis, Cometis de Kincardin, &c, supremi Scotias gubernatoris, anno MDCXLIV. et duobus sequentibus, prasclare gestis, commentarius.” ³²⁸

Wishart subsequently added a second part, bringing the narrative down to the period of Montrose's death. A copy of the work was suspended round Montrose's neck during his execution.

After the fall of Montrose, Wishart became chaplain to a Scottish regiment in the United Provinces; he subsequently officiated as chaplain to Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia.³²⁹ On the Restoration, he was appointed rector of Newcastle, and on the 3rd of June 1662 was consecrated Bishop of Edinburgh. He died in August 1671, in his seventy-second year. Though a vigorous upholder of the royal prerogative, he was privately a lover of toleration.

[105] He sent daily a portion of his dinner to the prisoners captured at the engagement at Pentland in 1666, and warded in prison at Edinburgh. He bequeathed to the poor of Holyrood £500 Scots.³³⁰ On an elegant mural monument raised to his memory in the Abbey of Holyrood is the following inscription:

“Hic recubat Celebris Doctor Sophocardius alter,
Entheus ille Σοφος καπδιαν Agricola.
Orator fervore pio, facundior olim

³²⁷ Though the statement in the text as to the Bishop George Wishart's descent seems justified by the authority of Nisbet, we are only certain that the Bishop sprang from the House of Logie Wishart.

³²⁸ Transl. — J. G. A commentary on the affairs of the most serene and powerful Charles, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, etc., under the rule of the most illustrious James, Marquis of Montrose, Earl of Kincardine, etc., supreme governor of Scotland, in the year 1644. and the two following, especially distinguished deeds.

³²⁹ Elizabeth Stuart was Electress of the Palatinate and briefly Queen of Bohemia, as the wife of Frederick V of the Palatinate.

³³⁰ Fasti Eccl. Scot., vol. i., p. 392 ; vol. ii., p. 394; vol. iii., p. 724.

Doctiloque rapiens pectora dura modis.
 Ternus ut Antistes Wiseheart, ita ternus Edinen.
 Candoris columen nobile, semper idem.
 Plus octogenis hinc gens Sophocardia lustris,
 Summis hic mitris claruit, atque tholis;
 Dum cancellarius regni Sophocardius, idem
 Praesul erat Fani, Regulae Sanctae, tui. A
 tque ubi pro regno, ad Norham, contendit avito
 Brussius, indomita mente manuque potens;
 Glasguus Robertus erat Sophocardius alter,
 Pro patria, qui se fortiter opposuit.
 Nec pacis studiis Gulielmo, animisve Roberto,
 Agricola inferior, caetera forte prior;
 Excelsus sine fastu animus, sine fraude benignus,
 Largus opis miseris, intemerata fides.
 Attica rara fides; constantia raraque, nullis
 Expugnata, licet mille petita, malis.
 In regem, obsequii exemplar, civisque fidelis
 Antiquam venerans, cum probitate, fidem.
 Omnibus exutum ter, quem proscriptio, carcer,
 Exilium, lustris non domuere tribus.
 Ast reduci Carolo plaudunt ubi regna secundo,
 Doctori Wiseheart insula plaudit ovans.
 Olim ubi captivus, squalenteque carcere laesus,
 Annos ter ternos, praesul honorus obit.
 Vixit Olympiadas terquinas; Nestoris annos
 Vovit Edina: obitum Scotia moesta dolet
 Gestaque Montrosei, Latio celebrata cothurno:
 Quantula (proh) tanti sunt monumenta viri!"

[106] Bishop Wishart's epitaph may be thus rendered in a free translation:

"Here rest the remains of the distinguished Doctor George Wishart, the third bishop of his name. Gifted with superior wisdom and piety, he by his eloquence and learning moved the stubborn and reclaimed the vicious. A pattern of honour, he maintained a consistent and upright life. For four hundred years, the members of his House were remarkable both in Church and State. William Wishart was Chancellor of the kingdom and Bishop of St. Andrews. Robert Wishart was Bishop of Glasgow, and a zealous supporter of King Robert the Bruce, and an upholder of the national cause. Bishop George equalled Bishop William in his love of peace, and Bishop Robert in his patriotic valour. He celebrated the exploits of the great Montrose. In his deportment, dignity was unallied with pride. The poor shared largely of his bounty. His generous emotions neither misplaced confidence nor misfortune might arrest or overcome. Loyal to his sovereign, he was devoted to his country. Thrice deprived of his substance, he faithfully endured impeachment, imprisonment, and exile. Having long suffered adversity, he was privileged on the restoration of monarchy to experience comfort. In the city where he was cruelly imprisoned, he was for nine years an honoured bishop. He attained the venerable age of [seventy-two]. Edinburgh wished that he might reach the years of Nestor (of Homer's *Iliad*), and Scotland bewailed his death."

Bishop Wishart married Margaret Ogilvy, by whom he had four sons, Hugo, Captain James, Patrick, and Robert, and two daughters, Jean and Margaret. Jean, the elder daughter, married William Walker.³³¹

Gilbert Wishart, younger son of Thomas Wishart in Ballandarg, graduated at King's College, Aberdeen, in 1622. Prior to the 17th of March 1635, he was admitted to the pastoral charge of Dunnichen, Forfarshire. He died in January 1688, aged about eighty-six, leaving a son, John, and a daughter, Isobel, who married John Ogilvie in Easter Idvie.³³²

John Wishart was Regent of Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and one of the Commissaries of Edinburgh. [107] He owned the estate of Balgavie, which he latterly exchanged for the barony of Logie Wishart.³³³ He is described by Nisbet as "nephew to the bishop, and great-grandson of Sir John Wishart of Logie."³³⁴

In the beginning of the sixteenth century or earlier, a branch of the House of Pitarrow obtained the lands of Drymme or Drum, near Montrose. In an instrument dated the 14th of June 1565, seising ³³⁵ George Wishart, brother of John Wishart of Pitarrow, in the lands of Westerdoid, Forfarshire, George Wishart of Drymme is named as his attorney.³³⁶ To the discharge of an assignation by the laird of Dun, dated the 17th of June 1581, George Wischart of Drimme is a witness.³³⁷ On the 7th of June 1580, George Hepburn, Chancellor of Brechin, directed to him as bailie a precept of sasine for infefting Paul Fraser, precentor of Brechin, in a portion of waste land.³³⁸

To George Wishart, elder of Drymme, was granted on the 7th of August 1591, a royal charter of the moor called Menboy.³³⁹ By George Wishart of Drymme, son of the preceding, the moor of Menboy was sold on the 26th of July 1605 to Alexander Campbell, Bishop of Brechin, and Helen Clephane, his second wife.³⁴⁰

Of the family of Wishart of Drum, certain members settled in the parish and burgh of Montrose. In the parish register of Montrose, "George Wyscheart, guidman of Irvine," on the 22nd of October 1624, is named as witness to a baptism. Bailie George Wyschart is mentioned in the baptismal register on the 22nd of March of the same year. On the 2nd of March 1649, James Wischart, described as lawful son of Mr. James Wischart, burgess of Montrose, had sasine of a tenement in Brechin as nearest of kin to Thomas Ramsay of Brechin, notary public, his uncle.³⁴¹ In 1656 James Wischeart is named as a member of the town council of Montrose,

³³¹ Fasti Eccl. Scot., vol. i., p. 392.

³³² *ib.*, vol. ii., p. 768.

³³³ Genealogical MS. in the Lyon Office, p. 477.

³³⁴ Nisbet's *System of Heraldry*, vol. i., p. 201.

³³⁵ [Seising: putting in legal possession of property or rights.](#)

³³⁶ Protocol Book of Thomas Ireland in the Town-Clerk's Office, Dundee.

³³⁷ Reg. Episc. Brechin., p. 309, No. 272.

³³⁸ *ib.*, p. 215, No. 193.

³³⁹ *ib.*, p. 286, No. 246.

³⁴⁰ *ib.*, p. 292, No. 253.

³⁴¹ *ib.*, p. 247, No. 189.

[108] and on the 28th of October of the same year, Mr. James Wishart, a son of the preceding, was chosen “doctor “or rector of the grammar school.

Mr. James Wishart, rector of the grammar school of Montrose, was father of a son, William, and three daughters: Jean, Margaret, and Elizabeth. He died the 11th of September 1683.³⁴² William Wishart studied at the University of Edinburgh, and on the 23rd of April 1669, was ordained by George Wishart, Bishop of Edinburgh, minister of Newabbey. He was translated to Wamphray in 1680, where he died unmarried in February 1685.

Elizabeth, third daughter of Mr. James Wishart, born in November 1664, married Robert Strachan, rector of the grammar school of Montrose, descended from the ancient House of Strachan of Thornton, Kincardineshire.³⁴³

By patent, dated the 22d of February 1769, the arms of William Thomas Wishart, head and representative of the House of Pitarrow, were recorded in the Lyon Register: *argent*,³⁴⁴ three piles or passion nails, meeting in a point, *gules*; ³⁴⁵ *supporters* — two horses, *argent*, saddled and bridled, *gules*; *crest* — a demi-eagle,³⁴⁶ wings expanded, proper.

³⁴² Fasti Eccl. Scot., vol. i., pp. 597, 664; Montrose Parish Records.

³⁴³ Montrose Parish Records.

³⁴⁴ *Argent*: of lustrous grey; covered with or tinged with the color of silver.

³⁴⁵ *Gules*: (heraldry) the tincture red, represented in engravings by parallel vertical lines.

³⁴⁶ *Demi-eagle* (heraldry): the upper or front half of an eagle divided horizontally or vertically.

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Appendix

FROM THE MAYOR'S CALENDAR, BRISTOL.

Thomas Joffroy Mayor
William Gay Esq.
Sand. Hayes Esq.

1700
J. By. 1700

That this year the 27th day of May a Scott named George Wynd
Tent forth his Lecture in S. Nicholas Church of Exeter the most blasphemous
more heily that ever was heard openly declaring that Christ nother hath
ney could merite for hym, ne yet for us. which he also brought many of the
Common of this towne into a greater error, and dyces of thern were
spred by that hereticall Lecture to heresy. Whereupon the said stuff
wicked Scott was accused by Mr. John Korne Deane of this Diocese of Exeter
And same day was sent to the most Reverend Father in god the Arch-
bishop of Cambridge, before whom and others that be inquisitors the
Bishops of Exeter, Norwich, and Hereford were called as Doctors etc.
And he before thern was examined, convicted, and condemned in and upon
the doctourly sentence abovementioned. Whereupon he was imprisoned to be
a Prisoner in S. Nicholas Church Exeter, and the 11th of the same the 27th
day of July a. d. 1700. And in Exeter Church and pisse thereof the 27th day
of July a. d. 1700. which Execution was duly executed in some forsaids