

**HISTORY OF THE BURGH OF
CANONGATE: WITH
NOTICES OF THE ABBEY AND
PALACE OF HOLYROOD**

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History of the Burgh of Canongate: With Notices of the Abbey and Palace of Holyrood by John Mackay

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JOHN MACKAY

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Abbey and Palace of Holyrood.

BY

JOHN MACKAY,

AUTHOR OF "THE BARONY OF BROUGHTON."

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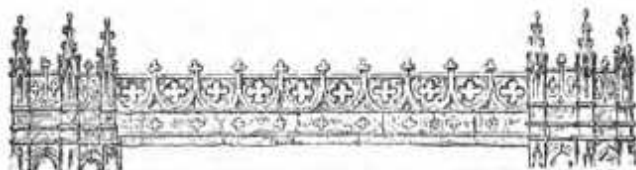
P R E F A C E.

SOME years ago we published a small volume, entitled "HISTORY OF THE BARONY OF BROUGHTON," a district which possessed an independent jurisdiction from that of Edinburgh until a recent period, but now incorporated within the boundaries of the City of Edinburgh. Broughton, as well as the Canongate, originally belonged to the Abbey of Holyrood; and, while examining the old Records, we found its history so closely connected with that of the Burgh of Canon-gate, and containing matter of much interest not hitherto published, as to induce us to take a few notes thereof. The Canongate, from its proximity to the Abbey and Palace of Holyrood, and having contained the residences of many of the Scottish Nobility and attendants of the Court, was the scene of numerous historical and momentous events; but on the departure of the King, Court, and Nobility, and after the Union of the two Kingdoms, it experienced the

consequent vicissitudes of fortune, from Courtly splendour to neglect and silence. Going over the notes lately, and taking into consideration the fact, that, while various Histories of Edinburgh incidentally notice the Canongate, no separate account of the Burgh has been written, we thought a narrative of these events, and a description of its most memorable localities, as illustrating the many changing phases of Religion, Manners, and Municipal Government, extending over a period of seven centuries, might be of interest to the general reader. And while soliciting the indulgence of our readers for omissions and imperfections on our part, we express the hope, that, however feeble the attempt, it may be considered as a stone added, by a native of the Burgh, to the cairn of remembrance of the Chronicles of the Canongate.

J. M.

EDINBURGH, *May 3rd, 1879.*



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HISTORY
OF THE
Burgh of Regality
OF
CANONGATE.

CHAPTER I.

FOUNDATION OF THE BURGH UNDER GRANT BY KING DAVID THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND TO THE ABBEY OF HOLY ROOD, OR "DOMUS SANCTÆ CRUCIS."

THE CANONGATE of Edinburgh is one of the most ancient Burghs of Regality in Scotland, having been founded in 1128, in virtue of powers contained in a Charter, by King David the First of Scotland, to the Abbacy of Holy Rood. After conferring various lands, gifts, and privileges the King gave leave to the Canons "to establish a Burgh between that Church (Holyrood) and my Burgh (Edinburgh); and I grant that their Burgesses have common right of selling their wares and of buying in my market freely, and quit of claim and custom, in like manner as my own Burgesses. And I forbid that any one take in their Burgh, bread, or

ale, or cloth, or any ware, by force, or without consent of the Burgesses. . . . I will, moreover, that they hold all that is above written as freely and quietly as I hold my own lands." That Charter was confirmed by King William the Lion (1171), King Robert the First (1327), and by Charter of Confirmation granted by King David II., 30th December 1343, it is stated, "And we will that they have, hold, and possess all their foresaid lands and free Regality in all and by all as freely and quietly as any Regality is held or possessed by any one in our kingdom." He also appointed the Abbot and Convent to the Chaplainry of the Chapel Royal, so that the Abbot should be principal Chaplain.* The bestowal of the grant was ascribed to an incident which occurred to King David the First when hunting in the grounds near to where the Abbey was afterwards erected.

The legendary account of the foundation of the Abbey, from the narrative of Hector Boece, as given in Bellenden's translation,† is as follows :—

"Eftir deith of Alexander First, his brothir David com out of Ingland, and was crownit at Scone the yeir of God MCXXIV. yeiris, and did gret justice eftir his coronation in all partis of his realme. He had na weirs during the time of King Hary, and was so pietuous that he sat daylie in jugment, to cause his puir commonis to have justice ; and causit the actionis of his nobles to be decedit be his other juges. He gart ilk juge redres the skaithis that come to the party be his wrang sentence ; throw quhilk he decorit his realme with mony nobil acts, and ejeckit the vennomus custome of riotous cheir, quhilk wes inducit afore be Inglismen quhen thay com with Quene

* *Vide* Charters and other documents of the City of Edinburgh : "Scottish Burghs' Records Society."

† Bellenden's "Cronikles of Scotland, the twelf Buke," p. 297