



Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

August 2022

"The will to do, the soul to dare"

Dear Faithful,

This month's main article, though it has much relevance for Catholics today, is not, strictly speaking, 'edifying' in that it deals principally with error and its propagation. I thought, then, that, for these prefatory words, I would supplement the brief reference to St. Drostan in last month's *Vox Clamantis*. I referred then to the visible influence of this contemporary of St. Columba particularly in place names in Aberdeenshire but a correspondent from the far North informs me that there is also much evidence for the missionary activity of St. Drostan in Caithness.

I was somewhat sceptical about this since to reach Caithness over the hilly and very rough terrain in between would have been very arduous. It is true, however, that from Deer the hills of Morven and Scarabens can be seen across the firth and, it should be remembered 'Columcille (Columba) and Drostan mac Cosgreg his pupil came from Hi (Iona) as God had directed them unto Abbordoboir', so sailing at least within sight of the coast would not have been an unremarkable thing. They would have had to go as far up as Sinclair to have made land safely. This is possibly confirmed by the proximity of Ackergill where were found the footings of a building measuring around 12 by 7 yards said to be the remains of a chapel dedicated to St. Drostan. It appears as a rectangular hollow in the ground. There is evidence of walling at the east end, near to the small burn which flows past it to the cliff edge where it is about 2ft high. This is also known as the chapel of St. Tear.

Now, the name Drostan appears in many place names in Caithness with various spellings – Tristan, Trostan, Tustan, Trothan. Tear is a curious form, though, if we bear in mind whence he had sailed (Deer/Tear), it makes the connection more compelling if more enigmatic.

At Brabstermire, the remains of a chapel were found at the beginning of the 20th century. When excavated the site revealed a small building of the chancelled type. There is now nothing to be seen, but the walls were 4ft thick, dry built and plastered over with shell lime on the inside. The dimensions of the nave were 19ft by 11ft and that of the chancel as 8ft by 8ft.

In the parish of Orlig are the roofless remains of the old church of St. Trothan. This may be built on an earlier site of 'Seipel Trosten', as it was known locally by Gaelic speakers, or the Chapel of Drostan. An early font stands by the entrance to the burial ground in which lies a slab with a rectangular hole cut out in it. This was probably a socket for the support of a cross.

At Westfield in the parish of Halkirk is a burial ground which is still known as St. Trostan's. An oval-shaped stone font is built into the south east wall. According to tradition it always contains water and never becomes dry. It is said to weep tears which again may be a reference to Deer (the etymology is shaky considering the lack of English spoken in this area until recently). The exact site of the chapel, again known as 'Seipel Trostan', is not certain though it may be situated to the east of the burial ground on the opposite side of the channel which drains the Loch of Westfield. There are stones here but their form is uncertain.

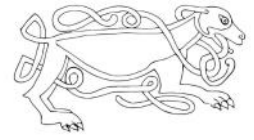
In all there are 6 sites which show the working of St. Drostan and a few more evidencing his companions, Fergus and Moddan. Perhaps the saints of Caithness might be the subject of another article in future months!

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)



THE COVENANTERS



The history of the Covenanters might seem an odd subject for a Catholic newsletter. Indeed, it is hard to think of a group of people more bitterly opposed to the restoration of the True Church in Scotland than this originally small but virulent movement. Nonetheless, their role in the century following Knox's rebellion with regard to monarchy and the Faith are so significant and this history so little known that I have devoted this month's article to them.

Calvinist Presbyterianism had been imposed on the Nation by force of arms in 1560, taking advantage of the lack of a King to defend the Church. As we saw last month, it was the death *sans issu* of Alexander III in 1286, leaving the Scottish throne vacant, that the whole period of the Scottish wars of Independence began. Similarly, when James IV was killed at Flodden in 1513, his only surviving legitimate son and heir, James V, was crowned at the age of 17 months. There was, therefore, a long period of regency though he survived until the age of 30, dying of probably cholera or dysentery, not sorrow on learning of Solway Moss, as people said at the time. This left a six-day old female heir, Mary. She was betrothed to the Dauphin of France at 6 and at 16 married him, leaving regents to decide Scottish destiny for around 20 years. By the time she returned in 1561, it was too late; religious revolution had swept away a thousand years of Christendom. Six years later, she was forced to abdicate in favour of her one-year-old son, James, and another long period of regency began.

This long period of governing with but a figurehead King (or Queen) fatally wounded Scottish independence. Presbyterianism saw a King as willed by God but could not countenance any monarch who saw himself as anything more than *par inter pares* and, of course, favouring, much less practising, Catholicism. The tensions began in 1583 when James VI finally took control of government. Though forcibly educated in the Kirk, he aspired to the absolutist monarchy of his ancestors. Though he persecuted Catholics both in Scotland as well as (after 1603) in England, it was because he saw *himself* as the Head of the Church by Divine Right not for any particular religious hatred. This was exactly the opposite of the Kirk. The King was certainly appointed by God for the defence of the Kirk, they said, (i.e. by forcibly imposing Presbyterianism throughout his realm) but he was not to meddle in their internal affairs. When he insisted on imposing bishops on the National Kirk ("no bishops – no

King") the consequence was not leaving a united church in Britain but rather leaving his heir a divided Kirk in Scotland; a situation that would lead to Civil War, the murder of the King and, ultimately, the deposing of the Stuart dynasty.

James had visited Scotland but once in 1617. His son, Charles, likewise showed little interest in the country of his origin. He came finally in 1633 to be crowned but probably only because the Scots had refused to send the Scottish Crown Jewels down to London for a ceremony there. He wouldn't go to Scone and he brought his own Anglican priest for the ceremony. When, 3 years later, he imposed an Anglican prayer book on the Kirk, there were riots. The Bishop of Brechin thought to bring two loaded pistols into the service but in many other places, Edinburgh and Glasgow included, the tumult was violent and the clergy physically assaulted. The Bishop of Edinburgh escaped with simply being hailed 'a Pope, a Pope!'. The idea of a Covenant began to take shape in the minds of the Presbyterian Scots.



The National covenant, styled after the Covenant between God and His chosen people, was drawn up by Archibald Johnston (later Lord Wariston), a lawyer, and the minister, Alexander Henderson. It contained much of the anti-Catholic legislation since 1560 as well as a new definition of the king. As Melville had said to the previous King, "Thair is twa Kings and twa Kingdomes in Scotland. Thair is Chryst Jesus the King, and his Kingdome the Kirk, whase subject King James the Saxt is, and of whose kingdome nocht a king, nor a lord, nor a heid, bot a member"! Now it was in writing and sworn to first at Greyfriars by 3,250 people, then gradually spreading throughout the kingdom until around 60% of the population had signed it. Of course, at a time when few could write, some of the signatures are quite primitive, others probably didn't sign in an entirely free manner. As power between the Covenant-

ers and their opponents swung, however, this document became something of a shibboleth. When Charles met with Henderson and Johnston, it was his refusal to sign that led first to the bishops' wars, then to the English Civil War, though the Scots at first were reluctant to take part. Buoyed by their apparent successes, the Covenanters proposed to the English Parliament an extension of the Covenant, making Scotland, England and Ireland Presbyterian Kingdoms. Charles saw this as treason and the English Civil War began. When Charles had many successes, Parliament agreed to the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643 in return for Scottish support against the King. Charles then appealed to the Scottish nobles and they marched South to support him but were defeated by Cromwell at Preston. The Covenanters took over Edinburgh and a reign of terror, beheadings, etc. ensued. Then the English killed the King. This left the Covenanters without a king, so they invited Charles II to be their king – he signed the covenant in return for being also restored to the English throne. Cromwell, however, was not a convinced Covenanter (along with much of the model army and the English Parliament) and so marched North. The fanatical fighting of the Covenanters looked like defeating him but their fanaticism also meant that they purged their army of the professional soldiers who were 'ungodly' and they were instead defeated. The Kirk session fled Edinburgh and Charles back to France.

After this defeat the Covenanters broke into two groups: the Resolutioners, who were prepared for some compromise and the Protestors who were not. Cromwell's 'protectorate' was popular with neither group, whereas the Resolutioners had some sympathy for Charles. Johnston, now Lord Wariston, surprised everyone by joining Cromwell and accepted offices from him. With Cromwell's death, he was forced to flee to Europe in disgrace. The Restoration brought new challenges. The Resolutioners were in the ascendancy, bishops were appointed and all ministers made to swear allegiance to the king. 262 (Protestors) refused and were sacked. All independent sects (Catholics, obviously, but also Quakers) were forbidden. Mainly in the Southwest, the Protestors continued to meet, outside normally, their gatherings a mixture of religious service and armed conventicle. The failed march on Edinburgh and, later, the assassination of the newly-appointed bishop of St. Andrews, John Sharp, led to further bloody persecution of the Protestors who now organised themselves – some 6,000-7,000 in number, into the United Societies. Refusal to take an oath of loyalty to the King could result in summary execution.



The Accession of James VII turned dissent into rebellion. Charles had already made a secret treaty with Louis XIV to restore Catholicism to the British Isles, James now seemed to make that become a reality. The birth of his male heir (thus displacing his Protestant daughter, Mary, from the succession) led to William of Orange, her husband, invading England in November, 1688 (he was subsequently said to have been "invited" by the English). The next year the Scottish Convention accepted William and Mary as the legitimate monarchs of Scotland on the condition there would be no bishops and no Scottish book of Common Prayer.

This is perforce a very summary account of an immensely complicated period of roughly half a century. Its immediate consequence, the deposition of a Stuart (Catholic), replacing him with his (Protestant) daughters, sowed the seeds for rebellion and turmoil for another century which in itself further extinguished Catholicism from anything other than the nobility or the Highlands, principally by the warring factions of Episcopalians and Presbyterians having a united enemy in the one, true Church. Both factions of Protestantism persecuted the other when they were in the ascendancy, depriving the other of livings and very often (during the 'Killing Time' as Protestant historians call it) their lives. Whether it was an oath of loyalty to the King or to the Covenant, however, became immaterial when the King was a Catholic since neither side could swear that.



**Covenanters Monument, Darnead-Lin,
Auchterhead Muir**

Mass Schedule

	Carlisle	Glasgow	Edinburgh
Monday 1 st August	11am		
Tuesday 2 nd August	7.15am		
Wednesday 3 rd August	7.15am		
Thursday 4 th August	11am		
Friday 5 th August (<i>First Friday</i>)		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 6 th August (<i>First Saturday</i>)		11am	11am
Sunday 7 th August — 9 th Sunday after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 8 th August	11am		
Tuesday 9 th August			6.30pm
Wednesday 10 th August	7.15am		
Thursday 11 th August	11am		
Friday 12 th August	7.15am		
Saturday 13 th August		11am	11am
Sunday 14 th August — 10 th after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 15 th August — Assumption of the BVM		6.30pm	6.30pm
Tuesday 16 th August	7.15am		
Wednesday 17 th August	7.15am		
Thursday 18 th August	11am		
Friday 19 th August	7.15am		
Saturday 20 th August		11am	11am
Sunday 21 st August — 11 th after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 22 nd August	11am		
Tuesday 23 rd August			6.30pm
Wednesday 24 th August	7.15am		
Thursday 25 th August	11am		
Friday 26 th August — <i>O.L. of Czestochowa</i>			6.30pm
Saturday 27 th August		11am	11am
Sunday 28 th August — 12 th after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 29 th August	Priests' Retreat		
Tuesday 30 th August			
Wednesday 31 st August			

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If you require any further information concerning one of these places, or need to talk to a priest e.g. in case of emergency for the Sacraments, please ring the phone number mentioned in contact details.