



Scots Language Centre

The Screive fae Arbroath 6 Aprile 1320



Set ower in Scots bi Dauvit Horsbroch for the Centre for the Scots Leid

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Walter de Gray Birch, History of Scottish Seals (Stirling, 1905)*

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The Screive fae Arbroath



Til oor Maist Haly Faither an Lord in Christ, the Lord John, throu the providence o God the Heidmaist Pontiff o the Haly Roman an Universal Kirk, his hummle an leal sons Duncan erle o Fife, Tamas Randal erle o Moray, lord o Man an o Annandale, Paitrik Dunbar erle o the Mairch, Malise erle o Strathearn, Maucom erle o the Lennox, Weelum erle o Ross, Manus erle o Caitnes an Orkney, Weelum erle o Sutherland, Walter the Stewart o Scotland, Weelum o Soules, Butler o Scotland, Jeems lord o Dooglas, Roger Moubray, Dauvit lord o Brechin, Dauvit Graham, Ingram o Umfra, John Menteith, guardian o the erledom o Menteith, Alisaunder Fraser, Gilbert Hay, Constable o Scotland, Robert Keith, Mershall o Scotland, Hendrie Sinclair, John Graham, Dauvit Lindsay, Weelum Olephant, Paitrik Graham, John Fenton, Weelum Abernethy, Dauvit Wemyss, Weelum Mushet, Fergus o Ardrussan, Eustace Maxwell, Weelum Ramsay, Weelum Mouat, Aulan Murray, Donal Campbell, John Cameron, Reginald Cheyne, Alisaunder Seton, Andra Lesslie, Alisaunder Straiton, an the lave o the barons an heritors an the hail community o the kinrik o Scotland, we as leal sons kiss yer blissit feet in maist hummle wise.

Maist Haly Faither an Lord, we ken fae auld fernyears an the buiks o oor forefaithers that amang ither kenspeckle nations oor ain, the Scots, haes gotten namely. This Scots nation cam fae Muckle Scythie bi gait o the Tyrrhene Sea, ben the Pillars o Hercules, an syne bade for a lang time amang the maist barbarous o clans in Spainie, but in nae place cuid ony barbarian daunt on them. An sae it wis that thay cam, twal hunner year efter the fowk o Israel flittit ower the Rid Sea, an fund thair hame in the wast whaur thay bide tae this day. Tho the Brets wis driven oot an syne the Pechts dung doun, an tho the Norse, the Dens, an the Inglis affen lichtit on them,

they held it efter a sair fecht, free fae aw thirldom, as auld historians can shaw, an thay haud it yet. In this kinrik haes rung ane hunner an thirteen kings o thair ain kingly kinred, the line unbrukken wi ae ootlin.

The smeddum and can o thir fowk is weel-seen, but whit daes them mense alane is that the Kings o Kings an Lord o Lords, oor Lord Jesus Christ, efter his Passion an Resurrection, cawed them amang the first til His haly faith, even tho thay bade in the ootmaist pairts o the Yird. An He haedna them confirmed in thon faith bi jist ony body, but wi the first o His apostles – tho he wis second or third in rank – the maist douce Saunt Andra, the blissit Peter's brither, wi the ettle that Andra shuid gie them beild as thair patron for ever mair.

The Maist Haly Faithers yer foregangers wis tentie o thir things, an gied tae this kinrik an its fowk mony favours an richts as thaim belangin the Blissit Peter's brither. An sae oor nation, unner thair beild, leaved in freedom an peace until sic a time whan thon Michty Prince the King o the Inglis, Edwart, the faither o the ane that rings the day, cam in the guise o a freen at a time whan oor kinrik haed nae heid an oor fowk haed nae ill nature in them an kent naething o weirs an invasion, an syne he invadit an usurpit as an unfreen. The acts o ill-daein, slauchter, spulyie, fire-raising, gjein kirkmen the jyle, settin monasteries alowe, reivin an killin kirk fowk, an mony mair nummerless scunners that he commitit agin oor fowk, no sparin age or sex, releegion or rank, nae body cuid uptak but thaim that's haed it at first haun.



The second seal o Robert I (front)

But at lang an last, wi the help o Him that heals an blisses the hurtit, we are lowsed o aw thir ills, bi oor michty Prince, King, an Lord – the Lord Robert – that's tholed want, sairness, hunger an skaith wi a gled hert like anither Maccabaeus or Joshua sae that his fowk an his heritage nicht be deleveert oot o the hauns o oor unfreens. Throu

the Providence o God, bi the richts o kingship conform til oor ain laws an customs that we will uphaud tae the deith, an throu the consent o us aw, he is oor King. Til him, that haes upheld oor freedoms, an as muckle bi his ain richts tae the croun, we will haud siccar nae maiter whit. But shuid he turn awa fae whit he stertit, an gree tae mak us or oor kinrik subject tae the King o Ingland or the Soothron, we wad at aince drive him awa as oor unfreen an the cowper o his ain richts an oors, an set up anither king that cuid better fend us. For as lang as hunner o us is in life, in nae wey will we thole the Soothron tae owergang us. In truth it isna for glory, or wealth, or honours that we fecht, but for freedom alane, that nae honest cheil gies up but wi life itsel.



The second seal o Robert I (back)

Acause o thir things, maist Reverend Faither an Lord, we caw on yer Haliness wi oor prayers an aefauld herts in presence o Him that's Vicar on the Yird ye ring, afore Him that gies nae mair wecht tae Jew an Greek, Scotsman or Inglisman, but haes ae law for aw, that ye will look wi the een o a trauchelt faither on the stoushie an strife brocht on us an upon the Kirk o God throu the Inglis. We pray ye tae admonish this King o the Inglis, that he shuid be gled wi whit belongs him jist, seen as Ingland wis aince eneuch for seeven kings or mair, for tae gie us Scots peace, that bides in this wee Scotland wi nae dwelling-place ayont it ava, an wants naething mair nor whit's oor ain. We are aefauld tae dae aw in oor maucht tae win at peace.

Maist Haly Faither, this haes richtly tae dae wi you acause ye see hoo sair agin the Christians the heathen haes gotten, lowsed on the Leal for the sins that serrs them richt, an the boonds o Christendie aye presst inward wi thaim. An ken hoo muckle it wad fyle yer Haliness guid name gin ye warna tae shift while the kirk wis brocht intae dishonour. Sae tharefore yer Haliness maun admonish thae Christian princes that's

makkin oot for fause reasons that thay canna gae tae the Haly Land for weirs thay hae on haun wi thair neebors. But the richt reason is that makkin weir on thair sma neebors is faur less a fash tae them an brings quick spyles. Him that kens awthing kens, that war the King o the Inglis tae gie us peace, we an oor ain Lord King cuid gae the Haly Land wi gled hert, a threap we declare tae the Vicar o Christ an til aw Christian fowk.



Hooanever, gin yer Haliness lippens ower muckle on the tales the Inglis tells, an hings tae thaim, til oor ongauin skaith, syne aw the slauchter o fowk, the loss o sowels, an aw the ills that will faw oot atween us an thaim will be shairply laid at yer ain charge bi the Maist Heich. We will aye be thirt tae ye as the Vicar o God an in aw things please ye as yer biddable sons. We commit the uphaudin o oor cause til Him the Heichest King an Judge, castin oor cares on Him, an lippen on Him for baith maucht an speerit that we can ding doun oor unfreens. May the Maist Heich Ane keep Yer Haliness hail an fere til his Haly Kirk for mony a year tae come.

Gien at the monastery o Arbroath, in Scotland, on the saxt day o the month o Aprile, in the year o grace thirteen hunner an twinty an the fifteent year o the ring o oor King abuin named.