

James Durham: A New Biography, Part One

By Chris Coldwell

The surveyor of Scottish Theology, John MacLeod, in noting Presbyterianism's prominent seventeenth century theologians, wrote, "It would be unpardonable not to give a place among the mighties of his day to one who was among the mightiest of them all. This was James Durham...."¹ It is true, English Puritanism and Scottish Presbyterianism in the seventeenth century had many bright and shining lights, but James Durham ranks alongside the greatest of his generation for his theological depth, faithful preaching, and particularly for his moderate spirit at a time when such was in scarce supply.

THE DURHAMS OF PITKERRO

James Durham of Pitkerro (1622–1658),² the oldest son and heir of Sir James Durham, was born "a good gentleman, of the house and family of Grange Durham,

an ancient, honorable, and sometime flourishing family in the parish of Monifieth, in the shire of Angus."³ The founder of this family was William Durham, First Baron of Grange, who received a land grant of those lands from Robert the Bruce in 1322. Alexander Durham (died by 1534), Fifth Barron of Grange, who lived in the fifteenth and into the sixteenth century, during the reigns of James IV and James V, was the founder of the Durhams of Pitkerro. The Pitkerro designation came with charters granted in 1534 by James the fifth to Alexander's son John Durham, and the Durhams possessed the lands until debt reduced their fortunes in 1681.⁴ The family built Pitkerro Castle in about the

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1. John Macleod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History since the Reformation* (1943; 2nd ed., 1946; 3rd ed., The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), p. 94.

2. This introduction, updated, corrected, and expanded, derives from prior prefaces and other research on James Durham. See (more significantly*): Preface, *Concerning Scandal* (Naphtali Press, 1990); Editor's Preface, *Christ Crucified: Seventy-Two Sermons on the Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah* (Naphtali Press, 2001); Editor's Preface, *A Practical Exposition of the Ten Commandments* (Naphtali Press, 2002); **Antiquary*: James Durham's 1652 Sermon on Ephesians 4:11–12 Taught before the Synod of Glasgow: A Transcription from Manuscript," *The Confessional Presbyterian* 12 (2016); *Introduction, *Collected Sermons of James Durham: 61 Sermons* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2017); **Antiquary*: The James Durham MS III: James Durham's 228 Sermons on Song of Solomon 2–8," *The Confessional Presbyterian* 13 (2017); *Editor's Introduction, *A Practical Exposition of the Ten Commandments* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2018). See also, the life of Durham in Donald

John MacLean, *James Durham (1622–1658) and the Gospel Offer in Its Seventeenth Century Context* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), pp. 66–75. See also: an overview of Durham's life in Nathan Holsteen, "The Popularization of Federal Theology: Conscience and Covenant in the Theology of David Dickson (1583–1663) and James Durham (1622–1658)", Ph.D. Thesis, The University of Aberdeen (1996), pp. 190–197; the lengthy early eighteenth-century biography (c. 1739), "A Collection of Some Memorable Things in the Author's Life," affixed to various editions of Durham's works, and also with some additional material in notes, in *Collected Sermons: Seventy-Two Sermons on the Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah* (2017), p. 27 (hereafter "Life"); and a slightly different "short account of the author's life," with extracts from manuscript sermons preached by John Carstairs upon the death of Durham, prefaces *An Exposition of the whole Book of Job, with practical observations* (Glasgow: J. Bryce and D. Paterson, 1759).

3. The Durham holdings took up lands in several parishes including Dundee, Monifieth and Murroes. "The lands of Pittkerro are in the parishes of Dundee and Monifieth." Alexander Johnson Warden, *Angus or Forfarshire, the land and people, descriptive and historical*, volume 4 (Dundee: Charles Alexander & Co., 1884), page 397.

4. Warden, pp. 158, 397; Sir Robert Douglas, *The Baronage of Scotland, Containing an Historical and Genealogical Account of the Gentry of that Kingdom, Collected from the Public Records and Chartularies of this Country, the Records and Private Writings of Families and the Works of Our Best Historians* (1798), Durham of Pitkerrow, Largo, etc., pp. 473–476. J. Malcolm, *The Parish of Monifieth in Ancient and*



middle of the sixteenth century.⁵ The Castle of Pitkerro or more commonly Pitkerro House, is

A mansion in the parish of Monifieth, about two to three miles northwards from Broughty Ferry. It is a

Modern Times; with a history of the landed estates and lives of eminent men (Edinburgh and London: William Green & Sons, 1910), p. 341. John Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain*, volume 1 (London, 1833), pp. 287–288.

5. David MacGibbon and Thomas Ross, *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century*, volume 4 (Edinburgh: David Douglas, [1892]), pp. 127–128. The mansion survives as Pitkerro House, which was restored, modernized, and expanded by Sir Robert Lorimer, circa 1902–4, for the then new owner, Colonel Archibald Campbell Douglas Dick, C. B. The Dick family had owned the house since 1706, a grandson of the Rev. James Durham, James Durham of Luffness, having had to give up the property after inheriting it in 1689. Warden, p. 159. Malcolm, 344–345. By 1954, the house had again fallen into disrepair and was rented and renovated by a group of Catholic families to live as a community following a Benedictine lifestyle and has continued as such to this day (the property was purchased outright in about 1974). A chapel that was not in Lorimer's architectural drawings, was apparently added by the community and boasts more than one icon. Pitkerro House is a "listed building" now and protected by that designation as a structure of special architectural or historic interest.

6. "Although it is unclear when Alexander Durham first took office, he appears to have held the position of purse-master. Accounts describe him as a provider to the king's and regent's households in 1572 and only later in June 1580, when partially demitting his office into the hands of his son, James Durham, as the king's argenter and purse-master." Amy L. Julhala, "The Household and Court of King James VI of Scotland, 1567–1603" (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2000), pp. 19–20.

7. Malcolm, 343.

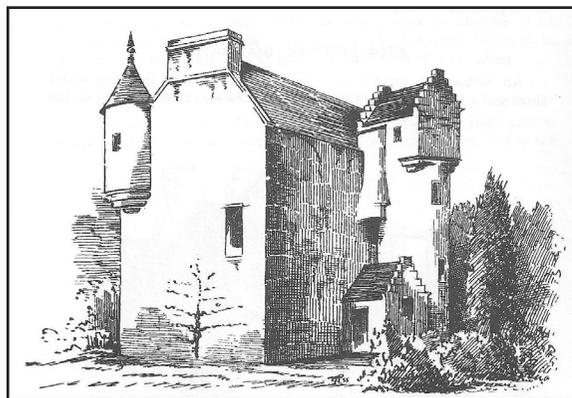
long narrow Building ... measuring about 80 feet in length by about 22 feet 6 inches in width, with a round staircase tower on the south front, which is brought to the square on the top in the usual manner, as at Claypotts Castle, which is not far off. The upper part of this tower forms a room reached by the turret stair shown in recess.... The ground floor seems to have comprised the kitchen and three cellars. The first floor contained the hall and private room. From the latter a private stair leads to the cellars. The building has been considerably modernised and added to.... In 1534 Pitkerro was in the hands of John Durham, second son of Alexander Durham of Grange of Monifieth, and was doubtless built by him or some of his immediate descendants.

The first person in Durham's family to rise to significant distinction in the royal government was his great-grandfather, Alexander Durham, the third Laird of Pitkerro. He "served King James VI. and I. in the capacity of 'Argentarius,'⁶ or Silversmith and Marshal. On the occasion of the King's visit to Scotland in 1617, the minute arrangements that required to be made for the journey between Berwick and Dundee were entrusted to Alexander Durham, who evidently performed his duties satisfactorily, as he was rewarded by his royal master with the sum of £226, 13s. 4d." Alexander's oldest son, Pitkerro's fourth laird and the Rev. Durham's grandfather, James,⁷

entered the service of King James VI. as Cashier and Clerk of Exchequer, and continued to serve in these



Pitkerro House. The two photographs above show the original wing. The circular stair with possibly the room at the top which served as Durham's study is shown above and in the illustration on the next page. The photograph on the facing page shows the Lorimer expansion on the left. These photographs are used courtesy of Richard Paxman.



Pitkerro House. From *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland*, IV, p. 127.

capacities James's son and successor, Charles I., at whose hands he was knighted.⁸ Sir James was evidently of a pious and benevolent disposition, for he gave to the

8. Douglas, *The Baronage of Scotland*, p. 474.

9. Malcolm simply references "Kirk Session Records," presumably referring to the Monifieth Kirk Register. Some records have been transcribed and reproduced, but whether a full transcription of the register has been made in these records is not clear. There is no information on the Durham births or marriages of interest in the online records as of this date. The original which has been microfilmed is held by the New Register House. It is described as far as its contents as dating before 1600, in Frank D. Bardgett, *Monifieth Kirk Register*, Scottish Church History Society, 1988. For online records see <https://www.scotlandspople.gov.uk/>.

10. Warden, 158.

11. Translated from the Latin for this new biography of Durham by Diane Baptie (AGRA). The Latin reads: Apud Edinburgh, 14 Dec [1620]. REX,—cum consensu &c. (208. 186),—confirmavit cartam Thome Fraser de Kinnell,—[qua,—cum consensu Roberti F. patris sui, Davidis F. patris sui, Joannis Striviling de Eister Braikie et Margarete S. ejus filie legit.,—pro perimptione contractus de data presentium, vendidit M. ALEXANDRO DURHAME filio legit. Jac. D. de Pitkerro, et HELENE RAMSAY ejus conjugii,—terras de Haltoun de Kinnell cum molendino, in baronia de Kinnell, et annuum redditum 75 merc. de terris de Weste Braikie aut aliis terris dicte baronie ad dictum Thom. in proprietate spectantibus, vic. Forfar:—TENEND. dictis Alex. et Hel. in conjuncta infeodatione, et heredibus inter eos legit. procreatis, quibus deficientibus, heredibus et assignatis dicti Alex. quibuscunque, de reg.—cum precepto sasine:—TEST. dicto Jac. Durhame, Wil. Durhame de Grange, Davide Mauld de Both, M. Alexandro Wedderburne scriba curie Deidonane, Tho. Fyiff ejus servitore (scriptore carte), M. Pat. Durhame ministro apud Monyfuith, olim in Grange, And. Clayhillis mercatore burgen. de Dundie:—Apud Dundie, 9 Jun. 1620]:—TEST. ut in aliis cartis &c. xlix. 311." *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum, The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, A.D. 1620–1633*, edited by John Maitland Thomson (Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House, 1894), item 111, p. 32.

12. xlix.311 (this refers to volume 49, f.311)

13. Malcolm, p. 343.

14. Malcolm cites, "Reg. Privy Council," vol. xii. p. 248. Cf. *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, v.12, 1619–1622 (1895), pp. 248–9.

poor of the parish of Monifieth, in the year 1626, the sum of 300 merks;⁹ and he applied for and obtained permission to erect on the north side of the choir of the kirk of Monifieth a burial aisle for his family—a handsome structure that stood and served many generations of Durhams until the demolition of the old church....

The estate continued to grow and under Alexander (d. 1621) and Durham's grandfather James (d. 1633), the lands of Kinnell were obtained by royal charter, and he and Durham's father sometimes are designated "of Kinnell."¹⁰ This charter translated into English reads:¹¹

No. 111. At Edinburgh, 14 December—The King with consent, etc.—confirms a charter by Thomas Fraser of Kinnell, with consent of Robert Fraser, his father, David Fraser, his uncle, John Striviling of Eister Braikie and Margaret Striviling, his lawful daughter—in order to implement a charter in which he had granted Mr Alexander Durhame lawful son to James Durhame of Pitkerro and Helen Ramsay, his spouse, the lands of Haltoun of Kinnell with its mill, lying in the barony of Kinnell and an annualrent of 75 merks out of the lands of Weste Braikie or out of any other lands which belonged to him in the said barony, lying in the Sheriffdom of Forfar. To be held from the king by the said Alexander and Helene in conjunct fee and the heirs to be procreated between them, whom failing to the heirs and assignees of the said Alexander whatsoever, with precept of sasine—Witnessed by the said James Durhame, William Durhame of Grange, David Mauld of Both, Mr Alexander Wedderburne, clerk of the court of Dundee, Thomas Fyiff, his servitor, (writer of the charter), Mr Patrick Durhame, minister at Monyfuith, formerly in Grange, Andrew Clayhillis, merchant burghess of Dundee—At Dundee, 9 June 1620—Witnessed as in other charters.¹²

THE PARENTS OF JAMES DURHAM

The father of our James Durham, James Durham, the fifth laird of Pitkerro, was the oldest of the four sons of the grandfather, also named James Durham. Sir James¹³

was a lawyer of distinction, was appointed "Solicitor for the King and the Prince (afterwards Charles I.) in all actions before the Session,"¹⁴ and, succeeding to his father's office of Clerk of Exchequer, afterwards attained the directorship of the Rolls of Exchequer, an office approximating to the present one of King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer. Throughout the State Records

are numerous references to this Durham, whose zeal in office is testified by various prosecutions and actions directed by him.

In 1632, James' father inherited the Durham estate and James became his heir, as oldest son.¹⁵ His father also "obtained a new [royal] charter of the lands and barony of Kinnell, 1st March, 1634, a charter of Greenlaw, in Kirkcudbrightshire, 21st December, 1635; and another of the lands and barony of Luffness, 24th June, 1646, after which he was designed of Pitkerro and Luffness." He renewed the charter to the family holdings with Charles I in 1641, which the Long Parliament ratified in 1645.¹⁶ The Durhams were staunch loyalists and under Cromwell's subjugation of Scotland in the 1650s, they suffered much and the father had all his lands handed over to others; however, he lived until the restoration of the monarchy and under Charles II had his property and offices restored. He died in 1663.¹⁷

None of the older histories and biographical notices of James Durham note the name of his mother. Douglas, who appears to be the oldest printed source for any information, simply says she was a daughter of one Hepburn of Humbie.¹⁸ In the new *Dictionary of National Biography* entry on Durham, Kyle Holfelder writes that his mother was Helen Ramsey, the daughter of John Ramsey, minister of Tealing, but provides no sources that give that information.¹⁹ However, several online genealogical researchers have stated this as a fact. This may be because of the following record transcription,²⁰

May 23, 1643. Obligation by James Durham of Powrie eldest son and heir of the late Mr Alexander Durham in Cuthill, in favour of Helen Ramsay his mother, now spouse to John Kinloch of Gourdie, to infest her, for the reasons therein mentioned, in a liferent annuity of 460 merks out of the lands and barony of Powrie, and that in place of her liferent of the principal sum of 5750 merks, being the redemption price of the lands of Haltoun of Kinell, and an annualrent of 75 merks out of the mains of Breakie, which were renounced by the said James Durham in favour of Thomas Frazer of Kinell.

1656. Extract Judicial Ratification by Margaret Muir spouse to Mr James Durhame, one of the ordinary ministers of Glasgow, of a Disposition granted by him with her consent, and also with consent of Janet Ramsay mother to the said Mr James, John Kinloch of Little Gourdie now her husband, Mr James Durhame of Pitkerro, and Sir James Durhame fiar thereof his eldest lawful son, in favour of Dougald McPherson of

Ballachroan, and his heirs male, etc.: of the lands of Easter Powrie.

These records, the transcription summaries of which at least seem to have been confused by all the Jameses, relate to the rights of the previously mentioned Helen Ramsay, who shared in the charter granted to Alexander Durham. When Alexander died he was living in Cuthill (or Cuithly).²¹ Helen had married again, to John Kinloch of Gourdie. While she was indeed the second daughter of John Ramsay, the minister of Tealing,²² she was not the Rev. James Durham's mother, but his great grandmother.²³

As for Douglas's statement that Durham's mother was a daughter of one Hepburn in Humbie, his misattribution as to which Ramsay was married to Alexander calls his accuracy into question and he is also the apparent oldest published source of that information.

15. National Records of Scotland, GD137, item 2008.

16. "Ratification in favour of Mr James Durham of his infestments of the barony of Kinnell," in *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, ed. K.M. Brown et al. (St Andrews, 2007–2020), 1645/1/228. Date accessed: 7 November 2020.

17. Warden, 158–159. Warden, and Douglas, Warden's likely source, write that James died shortly after Sir James, but this is incorrect since the latter lived to the Restoration. It would seem that Durham's brother Alexander became heir to the estate of Sir James. He died without issue and the estate passed back to Durham's son Francis. Burke, p. 287. Douglas, p. 475.

18. Douglas, 473. Warden, p. 159. Burke, p. 287.

19. John Ramsay (1569–1618) was minister at Tealing, and also held the office of archdean at the Cathedral of Dunkeld, which at that time came with that office. Kyle D. Holfelder, "James Durham," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (New DNB)*. This misinformation has been repeated in recent publications such as the volume by Donald John MacLean already noted and in this writer's introduction to *61 Sermons*.

20. National Records of Scotland, Papers of the Scrymgeour Wedderburn of Wedderburn Family, Earls of Dundee GD137, items 81, 2014; see also 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2450. The summary of Item 2014 not only calls Helen by Janet, but seems more clearly to indicate she was the mother of the Rev. James Durham. McPherson was apparently the beneficiary of Cromwell's confiscation of the Durham lands (see item 2018). The transcriptions/summaries given have made relations unclear, but it is not certain if this is due to the original records themselves, transcription faults, or in summarizing, or misunderstanding due to all the similar names.

21. Cuithlie was about where Guynd is today, about ten miles from Kinnell, Arbroath.

22. See *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Volume 10 [1875], p. 292. Interestingly, the same month of June 1620 in which Helen is named in the new royal charter, she and her sister Catherine resigned their share in their father's lands.

23. Douglas (p. 474), and apparently drawing from him, Burke (p. 287) and Warden (158–159), state that Alexander married Jean Ramsay, the daughter of Sir David Ramsay of Balmain. By the royal charter this is clearly not correct, and it is unclear where Douglas drew his information.

If he is correct, this is possibly a reference to the first Hepburn to purchase the Humbie lands, the Rev. Adam Hepburn of Humbie, minister of Strabo, who purchased the lands in 1586. His son, Sir Adam Hepburn, who is frequently referred to as Hepburn of Humbie, was born about 1600, so some sister not known to the records could have been of age to have been able to marry Durham's father, assuming some other Hepburn relation also then living in Humbie is not in view. No records have been uncovered to shed more light at this writing, and sadly, as noted already, the family memorial crypt in the old Monifieth church was destroyed,

24. Malcolm, p. 375. "All the stones of it [the mausoleum of Durham of Pitkerro], on which there was any inscription, are built into the present church." *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, volume 11 (Edinburgh and London, W. Blackwood and Sons, 1845), p. 546. As noted, the destruction was more severe than that description. "This monument was wantonly destroyed in 1812 when the old church was pulled down to make way for the present building." Agnes Hutcheson, "Jean Auchterlonie, Lady Grange and the Church of St. Rule, Monifieth," *Aspects of Antiquity: A Miscellany by Members of the Archaeological Section of the Abertay Historical Society*, Collected by Elise M. Wilson (Dundee: Abertay Historical Society Publication No. 11, 1966), p. 30. Some stones built into the 1812 church on the exterior have suffered decay, such as the dedication stone for the Durham mausoleum. Others were distributed or confiscated to put in other local building floors and garden walls.

25. Malcolm, p. 149. See the fate of other stones circa 1910 when Malcolm the local historian wrote, on pages 147–149.

26. George Christie, D.D., "James Durham as Courtier and Preacher," *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, IV Part I (1930), p. 66. Unfortunately, this manuscript cannot be traced. Christie gives no other information about it. Durham likely attended the parish school, if he was not tutored. The kirk session determined the schoolmaster should be supported by the whole parish in 1600, and the local nobility took an interest in the Monifieth school throughout the seventeenth century as well. In 1645, Jean Ouchterlong, Lady Grange, provided scholarships for four students a year, two of the parish poor, and two of which must be of Ouchterlong or Durham blood, if there were any of age. The schoolmaster named in this charter was Charles Geddie. The first schoolmaster recorded is Thomas Young in 1599. It is not clear who the man was commended by Christie, who would have taught Durham circa 1632. It probably was not Thomas Young, though that is not impossible, and more likely one or more men served as schoolmaster before Geddie. John Urquhart became schoolmaster when Geddie died in 1653 at age 32. In the 1645 charter, Durham, or more likely his father, were named as one of the people having the right to present those nominated for these scholarships. Malcolm, pp. 170–175.

27. "Life," p. 29. Murroes parish borders both Dundee and Monifieth parishes. Durham's third great grandfather purchased the lands in Easter Powrie in 1593.

28. Holsteen, 191. Depending upon how long Durham stayed at the university, his time there may have put him in early contact with John Carstares, who was up to a year younger than Durham, and also with Samuel Rutherford if he remained through and after 1638. In his preface to the Revelation lectures, Carstares wrote that he was attending the university at the same time as Durham.

and along with it many of the stones that would have possibly borne her name and any identifying information. The exact identity of James Durham's mother may be lost to history.

For the destruction of the grand old monuments, mouldings, oak carvings, &c., in the ancient church, the heritors of the day are chiefly to blame. To save expense they were utilised in the erection of the new church. Considerations of regard for the memorials of the past, if these existed at all in their minds, were cast to the winds when put in the balance with pounds, shillings, and pence. In those days many of the grave-stones which sorrowing relatives and kind friends had raised to keep in remembrance the memory of departed loved ones, were wantonly cast down. Some of them were used to form the stair leading up to the west door of the church, where they still lie [c. 1910], and others were removed and utilised for paving shops and dwellings in the village. It is sad to think that the heritors of Monifieth, in the first and second decades of this century, could have been guilty of such semi-barbarous acts as those above related. When the proprietors of the parish so acted, we need not be surprised that some of the villagers appropriated old gravestones to utilitarian purposes.²⁴

When the present church was being built, the burying-place of the Durhams was used as a receptacle for all kinds of masons' rubbish, and though the late Dr. Young [the then minister] tried two or three times to raise money to clear out the aisle, and to recover any of the memorial stones that might be hidden from sight, he did not succeed in his endeavour.²⁵

THE EARLY LIFE OF JAMES DURHAM

Not much is known of Durham's early years. He was made heir by his father in 1632 and from evidence of that same year George Christie concluded that he was an intelligent child. "His writing in the writer's possession—'Ja. Durham with my hand 1632'—at the age of ten does both him and his [school] master credit, and is an index to his early development and love of books."²⁶ In 1643 Durham inherited a portion of the family lands in Angus "in the parish of Murroes, then called Easter Powrie, but now called Wedderburn."²⁷ He stood in time to inherit his father's considerable estate.

At the outbreak of the Second Reformation in Scotland, James Durham was a student at Saint Andrews University (~1637–1640).²⁸ He did not finish his course of studies at university and looked simply to take up

the life of a country gentleman.²⁹ While of an upright blameless character, he was a stranger to faith in Christ, and from the influence of his upbringing, not “well affected” to the Covenanter aims of the Second Reformation and Presbyterianism. However, due to how badly Charles I had managed the country, few Scots opposed reform. The goals of the Covenanter cause were reform of the church and establishment of a constitutional monarchy, which had broad support amongst the clergy, nobility and populace.³⁰ Only the most open and ardent supporters of episcopacy were deposed, and even most royalists initially supported the dual goals.³¹ Laura A. M. Stewart gives the unfolding of “the standard political account” of the covenanted reform movement.

On 23 July 1637, the new Scottish Prayer Book was publicly read for the first time in St Giles’ Church in Edinburgh. The resulting riots precipitated a “crisis by monthly instalments” that culminated in mass signings of the National Covenant, initially in Edinburgh on 28 February 1638 and throughout the country thereafter. Around the same time, the Covenanter leadership formalized their organizational meetings into “Tables,” representing the parliamentary estates plus the clergy. As the authority of the king’s Scottish privy council ebbed away, the Tables evolved into a provisional government. At the end of the year, the first general assembly of the church held since 1618 defied the king’s commissioner, James, 3rd marquis of Hamilton, and declared that episcopacy had been abjured by the 1581 Confession on which the Covenant was based. War between the Covenanters and King Charles I was now more or less a certainty. Although the scuffle on the Borders known grandly as the First Bishops’ War was inconclusive, the expectation that a king backed by an English army ought to pulverize a faction of rebellious Scots handed victory to the Covenanters. Charles entered into negotiations but did not concede defeat. The Second Bishops’ War was disastrous for the king. A Scottish army crossed the border and occupied the north of England. As part of their demands for a peace settlement, the Covenanters insisted that the English parliament be a party to the treaty. Protracted negotiations finally resulted in the convening of the Scottish parliament at Edinburgh, with Charles attending in person from 17 August.... By the time parliament dissolved on 17 November [1640], it had, in practical terms, “deprived the king of all power” in the ecclesiastical and secular spheres. With the Irish rebellion already under way and the king’s relationship with his English parliament under great strain, the scene was set for what Conrad Russell termed the fall of the British monarchies.³²

DURHAM’S CONVERSION & CALL TO THE MINISTRY

About 1640 to 1642 Durham married his first wife, “a daughter of the laird of Duntervie;” and “his wife and her mother were both very pious women.”³³ This began the change in direction of Durham’s life. One day while they were visiting his mother-in-law in South Queensferry, Durham, upon their entreaty, accompanied them to a Saturday church service prior to communion at what is known as the Vennel Kirk.³⁴ He was so taken with the simple message of the gospel presented, that he returned the next day. “Ephraim Melvil preached from 1 Peter 2:7: ‘To you that believe, he is precious.’” Melville “so sweetly and seriously opened up the preciousness of Christ, and the Spirit of God wrought so effectually upon his spirit, that in the hearing of that sermon he first closed with Christ, and then went to the Lord’s table and took the seal of God’s covenant.”³⁵ He became devoted to the Lord from that day and dedicated himself to reading and studying, “for which cause, and that he might be free of all disturbance of the family, etc., he caused build a study for himself on the head of the stair of his house in the country, which yet remains standing, though all the rest of that great house be pulled down.”³⁶

At this same time, a similar reform movement led

29. See the entry for James Durham by William Garden Blaikie in the *Dictionary of National Biography (Old DNB)* and also the entry by Holfelder (*New DNB*).

30. The Covenanters “clearly embraced two revolutionary causes, that of presbytery and that of the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, by which the king’s opponents probably meant that Charles should defer to the wishes of the estates of the realm.” I. B. Cowan, “The Covenanters: a revision article,” *The Scottish Historical Review*, 47 #143, part one (Apr., 1968): 40, 38.

31. Even royalists such as James Graham, Earl of “Montrose, no lover of bishops, embraced these two views, which at this juncture remained the ideals of the majority of a covenanted nation.” Cowan, p. 40. Early on Montrose was “a front-rank Covenanter,” raising money and forces for the cause. Laura A. M. Stewart, *Rethinking the Scottish Revolution: Covenanted Scotland, 1637–1651* (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 188–189.

32. Stewart, *Rethinking the Scottish Revolution*, p. 29.

33. “Life,” 27. “Anna, daughter of Francis Durham of Duntarvie” (Blaikie, *Old DNB*). Christie implies the date of 1642 as the year of their marriage in stating Durham was twenty years old. Christie, 66. The couple had one son, Francis Durham. Durham and his second wife, Margaret, had three sons, James, Alexander, and John. Hew Scott, *Faeti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ; The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*, vol. 3 (1920), p. 456.

34. See two accounts in Robert Wodrow, *Analecta, or Materials for a History of Remarkable Providences; mostly relating to Scotch Ministers and Christians*, 4 vols. (Printed for the Maitland Club, 1842–43), 3:104–5 and 2:115. The Vennel Kirk was converted into a home in 1999.

35. “Life,” pp. 29–30.

36. Life, in *Collected Sermons*, vol. 2, p. 28. If this describes Pitkerro House, as it seems, this may perhaps be the room at the top of the stairs referred to in the prior description.

in England by a Puritan “Long Parliament” called for Scotland to come to their aid, during the English Civil War (1642–1646). In 1644 Durham served as a captain in his brother Alexander’s regiment.³⁷ George Christie records the details of the next events that would change Durham’s course of life, and notes that his,³⁸

somewhat idyllic life of studious leisure and local respect was interrupted by the declaration of war. The difference between King and people had widened rapidly since the signing of the National Covenant in 1638, and when England subscribed the Solemn League and Covenant at London on September 22, 1643, Scottish troops moved southwards to aid those who had risen against the King. Durham received a commission, and saw service under [General] Leslie in the summer of 1644. In January of the following year the State borrowed from “James Durham of Powrie” “on publick surtie” the sum of 600 merks or £400 (Scots).³⁹

It was while on military duty that he received what seemed to him direct guidance as to his future course of life. “He sometimes acted more like a Minister than a Captain, standing on the Head of his Company, and

37. Warden, 4.159.

38. George Christie, p. 67.

39. Christie references, Scottish History Society, Second Series, vol. XVI, *Papers relating to the Army of the Solemn League and Covenant, 1643–1647*, edited with an introduction by Charles Sanford Terry, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Printed by T. and A. Constable for the Scottish History Society, 1917), 2.368.

40. Christie, p. 67. Christie is quoting from the older biography. See “Life,” p. 29.

41. Howie gives Durham’s affirmation as “I am one of God’s priests.” John Howie, *Lives of the Scottish Covenanters* (Greenville, SC: A Press, 1981), p. 212. See “Life,” pp. 29–30 and the brief account in *Analecta*, 3.105.

42. John Livingstone, “Memorable Characteristics,” in *Select Biographies*, edited by W. K. Tweedie, 2 vols. (Wodrow Society, 1845, 1847), 1.332.

43. See the letter of call from Blackfriars in “Life,” pp. 30–31. Durham was “presented by the town council on 22nd September, and ordained and admitted on 2nd December; had charge of the south quarter of the city from 1647–1648....” James D. Marwick, *Charters and Other Documents Relating to the City of Glasgow: A.D. 1175–1649* (Glasgow, 1897), p. dcxxxii. Durham was licensed to preach in Irvine on May 18. Holfelder, *New DNB*.

44. *Analecta*, 3.105. The spelling has been modernized in citations from sources where it is old style or not standard English spelling. Durham and Dickson were in Irvine because of the plague. “When the pestilence was raging at Glasgow, 1647, the masters and students of the University removed to Irvine upon Mr. Dickson’s motion. There the holy and learned Mr. Durham passed his trials, and was earnestly recommended by the professor to the presbytery and magistrates of Glasgow, and in a little time ordained minister to that city.” Life of Dickson, *Select Biographies*, *ibid.*, 2.11

giving them many serious Exhortations, Advices and Counsels for their Souls, and prayed before them so powerfully and effectually, that not only all his Company, but Strangers who passed by and heard, were greatly affected and surprized, looking on him not only as a good Man, but a great Man, in whom much of the Spirit of God was.”⁴⁰

Before going into action—probably at Marston Moor, July 2, 1644—he had called his men together for prayer, when David Dickson, Professor of Divinity at Glasgow, then with the troops, happened to ride past. Observing the act of devotion, Dickson dismounted and joined them, afterwards calling for this Cornelius-like officer and conversing with him for a little, with the result that he laid a solemn charge upon him to serve in the ministry as soon as his soldiering was finished. Durham himself was by no means clear as to doing this, but later events—“two remarkable Providences,” a biographer terms them—removed his doubts. In the engagement he had his horse shot under him, while he was unhurt; and a little later a Royalist soldier, about to strike him down with his sword, held his hand for a moment to ask if he was a priest—Durham’s grave carriage, his black clothes and band, then the fashion with gentlemen, had induced the question. The young Scottish officer said he was, and so his life was spared. In gratitude he vowed to devote himself to the ministry.⁴¹

After his military commitment was over, he pursued the study of theology under Dickson at Glasgow, “where, in a short time, he profited so as he might have been a Professor of Divinity in any universitie in Europe.”⁴² Upon completion of his studies he was ordained on December 2, 1647, after passing his trials in the Presbytery of Irvine, and he received a call and first served as minister at Blackfriars church in Glasgow.⁴³

I heard Mr. Andrew Miller, late Minister of Neilston, tell me that he was at Irvine school, when he saw Mr. Durham come to Irvine to Mr. David Dickson, who was Minister there, and he said, he looked as if he had been a man come to some considerable years, though he was then very young, and he thought he had been some old deposed minister coming to get a favour of Mr. David Dickson; but there he passed his trials before the Presbytery of Irvine, where Mr. Colvil of Beith disputed with him.⁴⁴

The now Reverend James Durham entered the ministry planning to leave his former life behind, but this

proved a great trial. While he was spending a few weeks preaching in locations around his home in the parish of Murroes,⁴⁵ and closing his estate affairs to prepare to engage the life of a minister of the gospel, he received word to come back to Glasgow because his wife had taken seriously ill. She died shortly after his return and the first half of his short ministry he would undertake as a widower.⁴⁶

James Durham quickly rose to some prominence in the Scottish church and was appointed to the standing commission of the General Assembly in August of 1649.⁴⁷ This was a significant appointment. The Kirk's commission on which Durham served was roughly parallel in function to the state's committee of estates, empowered to deal with kirk matters that came up in the period between General Assemblies.⁴⁸

From 1639, the Scottish body politic was given voice by the three estates, which had been reconstituted after the expulsion of the clerical elite as the nobility, barons (or lairds), and burghesses. The estates met either in full parliament or in a smaller, theoretically less authoritative assembly, known as a convention. An executive council, called the committee of estates, made day-to-day decisions, effectively replacing the king's emasculated privy council. Although the bodies were unicameral, the estates also deliberated separately. A parallel set of structures, headed by the General Assembly, governed the remodelled presbyterian church or kirk.

In 1650, after only a few years of ministry in his first charge, Durham was looked upon as the best candidate to replace Dickson as divinity professor at Glasgow, since the latter had been called to the chair of divinity at Edinburgh.⁴⁹ Durham appears to have been Dickson's handpicked successor. The two were close and worked together on the text of the Sum of Saving Knowledge, which early took its place in 1650 in the traditional Scottish collection of the Westminster Standards. According to Wodrow, the Sum was written by David Dickson and James Durham, and their amanuensis was Patrick Simson, George Gillespie's cousin.⁵⁰

Despite Dickson's support, however, Robert Ramsay was chosen instead,⁵¹ and the Kirk fixed upon James Durham for his family's "hereditary connection with the Crown, his piety, his gravity, his prudence, and perhaps his youth (he was but 28) as eminently suited to be the Church's representative at the Court of the young King," and appointed him to that service in July, 1650.⁵² Durham had "the chief duty of ministering to the Royal Household devolved upon him. He acted also as the

constant channel of communication between the King and the Commission, met and consulted with frequent deputations from that body and with Committees of Parliament, carried letters from and to the King and joined in the discussions and orders of the Commission when meeting near the court or when he was sent to it."⁵³ As a member of the Assembly's standing commission, Durham had been intimately involved in the

45. The author of "Life," in detailing his preaching in parish churches around his home when closing his affairs to take up his ministry in Blackfriars, states that Durham's parish church was in Murroes, where he had considerable lands as heritor, and that his relatives all dwelt around Monifieth and attended there, where he also was invited to preach. "Life," p. 11. But it is still possible Durham lived at Pitkerro House, which is not a mile and a half from the site of the old and present location of the Murroes parish church, while it is 5 miles from the site of the old parish church in Monifieth.

46. See the account in "Life," pp. 31–32.

47. Holfelder, *New DNB; The Records of the Commissions of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland holden in Edinburgh the Years 1648 and 1649*, volume 2, edited by Alexander F. Mitchell and James Christie (1896), p. 299. Durham first appears in the minutes appointed to aid the church in Stirling in renewing the Solemn League and Covenant, pp. 178, 262, 321, 319.

48. Laura A. M. Stewart, "Scottish Politics, 1644–1651," in *The Oxford Handbook of the English Revolution*, edited by Michael J. Braddick (Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 115.

49. *Records of the Commission for 1648 and 1649*, p. 409.

50. "It's said by some that Mr. Dickson and Mr. Durham went sometimes to the Craigs, about the High Kirk of Glasgow, and made that little piece we have called *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*." Dickson and "Durham drew up *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*, in some afternoons when they went out to the Craigs of Glasgow to take the air, because they thought the Catechism too large and dark; (and, if I be not forgot my informer, Mr. P. S. [Patrick Simson,] was their amanuensis,) and the application was the substance of some sermons Mr. Dickson preached at Inneraray, written out at the desire of my Lady Argyle." *Analeceta*, 1.166, 3.9–10. Cf. *Life of Dickson* by Wodrow, *Truths Victory over Error* (1726; Glasgow: Bryce, 1764), p. xviii. For more information see Introduction, 61 *Sermons*, page 12, n15; Coldwell, "The Development of the Traditional Form of The Westminster Standards," *The Confessional Presbyterian* 1 (2005): 168ff; "Examining the Work of S. W. Carruthers: Justifying a Critical Approach to the Text of the Westminster Standards & Correcting the 18th Century Lineage of the Traditional Scottish Text," *ibid.*, pp. 43–64.

51. Robert Ramsay (c. 1595–1651) was minister in Glasgow from 1647. He was Rector of Glasgow University from 1648 to 1650 and Principal from the summer of 1651 until his death on September 4, 1651. The Town Council prevented Ramsay from taking the position in 1650.

52. "[A]ppointed chaplain to the king in July, 1650." *Charters and Other Documents*, p. dcxxxii. Durham lectured prior to a communion in May 1650 and lectured and preached prior to a fast before forces went to meet Cromwell July 27–28, 1650. See National Library of Scotland, MS 664a, in the Bibliography in the Appendices of James Durham, *Commentary on Revelation* volume 3 (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2022), p. 578.

53. George Christie, pp. 68, 70. Durham would have joined the King by August 20, 1650, on which date the kirk commission had instructed George Hutcheson to join Durham and help in making

communications with and preparations for the coming of Charles II to Scotland.⁵⁴

As chaplain, Durham was thrust into the center of the cyclone of Scottish politics of the Interregnum. The nation was divided into factions, Royalist v. Covenanter, Engager v. Anti-Engager, and Resolutioner v. Protester.

the king “sensible” of causes for his humiliation which they had sent previously. *The Records of the Commissions of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland holden in Edinburgh in 1650, in St. Andrews and Dundee in 1651 and in Edinburgh in 1652*, volume 3, edited by James Christie (1909), p. 193.

54. *Records of the Commission for 1648 and 1649*, pp. 355, 405, 437, 439, 440. Amongst other appointments, Durham was also appointed to committees to present overtures to parliament and to confer with the army in communicating to the English enquiring after their intentions towards Scotland. *Ibid.*, pp. 399, 419. The chaplaincy should have gone to Robert Blair, but he was in ill health, and he could not have withstood the frequent moving about of the king’s court. He also had begun to have strong issues of conscience regarding ministers getting too involved in civil affairs. Christie, p. 69. See *Life of Mr. Robert Blair...*, ed. Thomas M’Crie (Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1848), p. 233.

55. “These ideals proved to be incompatible, and most authorities are agreed that the prime cause of division lay in the basic inconsistency of the covenant whereby an attempt was made to defend the person and authority of the king while at the same time promoting policies contrary to his interest.” Cowan, p. 40.

56. That there was strong opposition to the Solemn League and Covenant amongst many of the nobility is affirmed by Baillie, who praised the Lord that the opposition had not been more severe. Cowan, p. 40. *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, ed. David Laing, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Robert Ogle, 1842), 2.102.

57. The king’s man in Scotland, James Graham, Earl of Montrose, eventually raised an army and did significant damage to the Covenanters’ military prestige in the eyes of the English, who lost multiple battles to Montrose in Scotland as Oliver Cromwell succeeded against the king’s forces in England. Finally, almost too late, Scottish forces left England for Scotland and crushed the comparatively weak forces of Montrose.

58. “By terms of the Engagement, the Scots would provide an army to rescue Charles from his English captors and return him to his authority, in return he would institute a three-year Presbyterian trial period in England and ‘endeavor a complete union of the kingdoms, so as they may be one.’ Conspicuous in its absence was a clause guaranteeing Charles’ personal adherence to the Covenant or the Solemn League and Covenant. The Engagement was quite clearly a compromise, and while it passed the Scottish Parliament easily, when it came to the General Assembly for approval, the deeply-split clergy narrowly defeated it.” Robert Harris Landrum, *Vast Visions and Intransigent Realities: The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1851–60* (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1999), p. 41. “More than any other legislation of the interregnum, the Engagement pitted the kirk against the state, striking at the distinction between the ‘two kingdoms.’” “Some of the ministers ... believed that ‘we should not make so many scruples to settle the throne and pull down the secretaries.’” *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42. Baillie had already come to Blair’s feelings on the matter. “I am more and more in the mind that it were for the good of the world, that churchmen did meddle with ecclesiastic affairs only.” Baillie, 3.38.

These divides had unfolded through the years in which Durham prepared for ministry and up to the time of his appointment to the royal chaplaincy. Before detailing Durham’s service to the king and his entry into ministry back in Glasgow, these divisions require some explanation and context.

Royalist v. Covenanter. Because of the intransigence of Charles’ father, Charles I, the dual causes of a Presbyterian reformation and of a constitutional monarchy proved irreconcilable.⁵⁵ The subsequent agreement with England in the Solemn League and Covenant proved too much of an attack on the monarchy for royalists.⁵⁶ A force fighting for the king was eventually crushed by Scottish forces,⁵⁷ and by an Act of Classes those who had taken up arms for the king against the Covenanter cause were banned as “malignants” from holding office or serving in the military.

Engager v. Anti-Engager. However, with the tide of events favoring Oliver Cromwell and the Sectarians over the Presbyterians in England, the cause of both presbytery and monarchy were in peril. Still wishing to maintain both, many of the Scottish nobility sought an agreement with Charles I, known as the Engagement,⁵⁸ promising to restore him to the throne but not requiring him to subscribe to the covenants. This was unacceptable to a considerable segment of the Kirk, and by a narrow majority the General Assembly condemned the agreement. Nevertheless, the Engagers raised an army and invaded England, only to be quickly dispatched by Cromwell’s forces.⁵⁹ Though a minority in the church, the anti-Engagers, aided and supported by Cromwell, seized political power and passed a considerably broader second Act of Classes on January 23, 1649.⁶⁰ This act thrust out of any civil and ecclesiastical office for various terms those who took part in the Engagement, those who did not seriously oppose it, and anyone of questionable moral character.⁶¹ Cromwell’s blessing to the anti-Engager government had been given in October, 1648.⁶² This comity ended with the execution of Charles I on January 30, 1649, and the negotiations to bring his son Charles to the throne continued the political struggles between Anti-Engagers and Engagers.⁶³

59. The Battle of Preston, August 17–19, 1648.

60. This is known as Whigamore’s raid. Cf. James King Hewison, *The Covenanters*, 2 vols. (1908; Revised and Corrected Edition, Glasgow: John Smith and Son, 1913), 1.448.

61. See the four classes given in Hewison, 1.452.

62. Hewison, 1.448. Both parties, who would become known as Resolutioners and Protesters, apparently could ‘look the other way’ and work with enemies of the covenant, the king and Cromwell respectively.

63. There is continuity to these divisions, narrowly from the

Protesters/Remonstrants v. Resolutioners. After months of negotiation, in which Durham was involved as a member of the standing commission, the late king's son was persuaded to take the covenant on June 23, 1650. It was clear he was insincere, and that he did so only because he could not return to Scotland or have any chance of gaining the crown without doing so. The clear impiety and duplicity apparent in the king's taking the covenant further intensified the divide between parties. Meantime, the English Parliament preempted what they foresaw would be a Scottish invasion by ordering Cromwell's English army to invade Scotland, which it did on July 22, 1650. In September, Cromwell and his forces managed to get cut off from supply lines and trapped at Dunbar by General Leslie's forces.⁶⁴ It should have been an easy victory. However, Leslie's forces had gone through yet another anti-Engager purge of malignants, and royalist traitors kept Cromwell informed of matters in the Scottish army. The troops were demoralized and filled with less seasoned men to make up for the purge. Leslie then made the tactical mistake of moving his forces; Cromwell made a surprise attack, catching Scottish forces asleep and unprepared to defend their position, and thus defeating the larger Scottish force on September 3, 1650. Charles II fled in a panic, believing he was going to be turned over to Cromwell, and involved himself in an ill-conceived "royalist coup d'état" to take place on October 3, which was planned to raise troops and overthrow the Scottish government.⁶⁵ The Committee of Estates ordered commissioners, which included James Durham "the K[ing]'s minister,"⁶⁶ to find and entreat the king to come back. Covenanter forces soon found him hiding in some rough accommodations and convinced him to return with them.⁶⁷

When the Estates learned that the king had fled, they commissioned the moderates Lothian, Sir Charles Erskine of Scottiscraig, James Sword and the minister James Durham to find Charles and convince him to return. They were instructed to express the Estates' 'grief and amazement' at his sudden and unexpected behaviour and assure him of their 'constant loyalty, faithfulness, and affection.' They were also to inform him that if he returned quickly all would be forgiven and they would see to it that his influence in the government was increased." "Contrary to the expectations of many, this abortive coup, which became known as 'the Start,' proved to be extremely advantageous for Charles. The moderates realized that it was only the claim to be acting in the king's name which allowed them to remain in power. If they admitted that Charles's flight had been anything other

than a good king led astray by evil counsel, they would implicitly be admitting the validity of the radicals' [i.e. Remonstrants'] charges concerning his malignancy and make their own position ideologically untenable. Accordingly, they moved quickly to placate him. On 10 October Charles was allowed to be present at the meeting of the Estates. The next day he officially apologized for his proceedings, and as was expected, claimed that he had been misled "by the wicked counsell of some men who had deludit him." After making this submission Charles was 'kindly received' by the Estates and hereafter permitted to attend all governmental meetings.

While those that would be known as the Resolutioners were dealing with a "malignant" king in their midst, ministers and others of the army of the west, known as the Western Association and who would become known as the Remonstrants or Protesters, were meeting and trying to maintain the integrity of their own party. The Western Association was first set up in 1648 and was revived by the Glasgow council after the defeat at Dunbar. The Resolutioners were deeply skeptical of the intentions behind this move, but could not afford to split the armed forces; therefore, they had acquiesced

Engagement through the Remonstrance, and broadly from the founding of the Covenanter government, the main question ultimately revolving around whether and to what extent the ecclesiastical authorities could ultimately undermine the civil leadership when it disagreed with their decisions. Even at this time, as has been noted, both Blair and Baillie regretted ecclesiastical entanglement in the halls of government. "Those who implemented the orders of the Engager parliament and committee of estates were not necessarily active supporters of the lawfully constituted authorities. Many may have reluctantly concluded that whatever their misgivings both about the motivations of Engager politicians and the trustworthiness of the king, the Engagement offered the best chance, in the circumstances, of an archipelagic settlement on the basis of the Covenant [i.e. retaining the unity of the three covenanted kingdoms]. Anti-Engagers responded by asserting that it was the general assembly that possessed the right to judge 'matters ecclesiastical.' This statement implied that the assembly was entitled to a large say in diplomatic policy, thereby undermining the regime's pragmatic ambiguity about parliament's status as supreme legislator and setting limits on the freedom of the executive to make decisions." See Stewart, *Rethinking the Scottish Revolution*, pp. 20–22.

64. Hewison, 2.11–15. Alexander Leslie, 1st Earl of Leven (1582–1661), was Lord General of the Army of the Covenant.

65. This is known as The Start. "... [C]onfusion created by Charles's last minute indecision caused his royalist support to evaporate and the rising to be abortive." Covenanter forces found the king and convinced him to return. Kyle D. Holfelder, "Factionalism in the Kirk during the Cromwellian Invasion and Occupation of Scotland, 1650 to 1660: The Protester-Resolutioner Controversy," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh (1998), 65–67.

66. James Balfour, *The Historical Works* (Edinburgh, 1825), p. 115.

67. Holfelder, *Factionalism*, pp. 660–67.

in essentially granting the Protesters their own army.⁶⁸ Yet the Protesters were rent by their own serious divide, in that a minority, including one of the army's leaders, Archibald Strachan, was heavily influenced by English sectarianism. Holfelder writes,⁶⁹

During the time that Cromwell occupied Glasgow, the [Western] Association made no attempt to resist him.⁷⁰ The leading radicals were otherwise engaged in a series of crucial meetings at Dumfries. In this convocation, Ker, Strachan and their officers were joined by Patrick Gillespie, representatives from the western presbyteries and certain radical lairds and burgesses. Wariston and Cheisly thought the meetings of such importance that they even hazarded a journey through enemy-held territory in order to attend. Cromwell's new overture to the radical colonels had brought to the fore an underlying dichotomy in the composition of the radical party—one that had been lurking thinly beneath the surface for some time: the inclination of the radical officers and certain western ministers to favour the English was inimical to the strongly antisectarian sentiments of Wariston, Guthrie and their coterie. Although the Wariston-Guthrie wing of the party were supportive of the Western army, they were staunchly opposed to any conjunction with the English. They viewed the Western Association as both a powerful bargaining chip in their dealings with the regime and as a final radical stronghold in the event that the moderates made an open alliance with the malignants. They were even willing to countenance the widespread rumours of the Association's incipient sectarianism, if the fear of such would give them further leverage in the Estates and Commission. Up until this point they had been able to successfully manage the extremism of the westerners to their advantage. Now,

however, with Cromwell's excursion into Glasgow, they were confronted with the imminent possibility that the separatist behaviour of the west would go beyond mere rhetoric and coalesce in an actual conjunction with the English. It was now incumbent on Wariston and Guthrie to devise a policy which would satisfy the different opinions and preserve the unity of the radical party.⁷¹ Failure to prevent a rift would completely undermine the authority of the radical party, irreparably damage their credibility and subvert whatever remaining ability they had to influence the agenda at Stirling. In an attempt to appease the more extreme westerners it was decided to resurrect and expand the "officers' declaration" which had been laid aside at the previous meeting of the Glasgow-Ayr synod.

From the outset there were sharp differences of opinion in these meetings. Baillie relates that "Strachan's axiome and debates did put the whole armie and committee of the West in such confusion and discouragement that all acting against the enemy was made impossible." The western colonels and their officers urged an unequivocal break with the [king's] regime at Stirling; while Wariston, Cheisly and the ministers advocated working within the regime in order to influence the agenda and effect change. Strachan maintained that Charles had "so farr fallen from all his right to England, that, for his wrongs to Scotland, he ought at least to be banished ... or made ane perpetuall prisoner." Wariston and the majority of ministers contended that, at least in principle, space should be left to Charles and the Estates for repentance and restoration. In the midst of their deliberations Ker and Strachan sent a message to Cromwell informing him that they were in favour of opening negotiations with him but Wariston and Cheisly would not give their consent.⁷² Their debates on policy continued until 17 October, when the assembled radicals finally approved the declaration to the Estates which came to be known as the *Western Remonstrance*. The final document was a compromise; an attempt to preserve the unity of the radical party.

Even though the Western Remonstrance was a compromise document, it was not well received when submitted to the Estates on October 22 and later to the assembly's commission on October 24. Amongst other things it "complained of the hasty admission of Charles II to the Covenants," and of his conniving with malignants and of the toleration of malignants generally, and faulting specifically the treaty by which it had been agreed to bring Charles to Scotland.⁷³ Regarding the defeat at

68. Holfelder, "Factionalism," pp. 53–54.

69. Holfelder, "Factionalism," pp. 68–70. Strachan and others favored making an alliance with Cromwell against the Scottish forces under Leslie. Strachan's direct negotiations with Cromwell made him odious to the Protesters, and he defected to the English when deprived of command and was subsequently charged with treason and excommunicated. Durham attended the assembly commission meeting that issued the latter censure. *Records for 1650–52*, p. 193.

70. Holfelder cites Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, 3.118.

71. "Radical party" and "Moderates" are Holfelder's terms for the Anti-Engager/Protester party and their opponents. See the explanation of the terms in "Factionalism," pp. 9–10.

72. Holfelder cites *Letters and Journals*, 3.113.

73. David C. Lachman, "Protesters," in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, ed. Nigel M. de S. Cameron (IVP, 1993), p. 681. Hewison, 1.22. "The Remonstrance identified the closing of the treaty with Charles as the iniquitous fount of all the land's grief and misery." Holfelder, p. 70.

Dunbar, the Remonstrants “interpreted the disaster ... as a want of God’s favour” for the “compromises” made since the king’s insincere taking of the covenant,⁷⁴ while their opposites faulted the policy of the anti-Engagers of continually purging the army of malignants for the Scottish army’s disastrous defeat, and considered their Remonstrance “high treason.” The commission meeting on November 28 condemned the Remonstrance but stopped short of any discipline at that time. The Protesters from that time stopped attending the commission, beginning the formal division of the kirk.

At this point a majority of civil and ecclesiastical leaders agreed to reverse course to rescind the Act of Classes. Upon queries from Parliament, the church’s standing commission passed resolutions repealing the anti-Engager policies in December 1650,⁷⁵ and after much delay agreed with stipulations to the repeal of the Act of Classes in May 1651.⁷⁶ The General Assembly approved the resolutions in July, the Parliament having rescinded the Act of Classes on June 2.⁷⁷ Supporters of these actions were the Resolutioners, who believed the nation should unite, rescind the Act of Classes, and open up service in the army in order to have a force sufficient to repel Cromwell’s forces. The Remonstrants took the label of Protesters, and believed God would support, as with Gideon, a purified army of Covenanters purged of all malignants, but no other.⁷⁸

JAMES DURHAM, CHAPLAIN TO THE KING

No doubt this backdrop of internecine divisions made Durham’s chaplaincy difficult service, but it was also soul-vexing work. From what is known of the character of Charles II, it is not hard to imagine why serving as king’s chaplain proved exceedingly grievous service for Durham.⁷⁹ Even though it is said, the “duties of this office he discharged ‘with such majesty and awe’ as to inspire the court with much reverence for him,”⁸⁰ Durham is recorded as saying that the king was “simple and cruel, and that he was aye glaiking⁸¹ at sermons and prayers, in kirk and family.”⁸² He served in this capacity for only a few months before the situation affected his health, while at the same time he was in financial straits due to Cromwell’s occupation. Among other things, he apparently was suffering as much as any from the quarterings and plunderings by soldiers, a trial of the times which he notes in his sermons, and from the lack of a stipend from Glasgow.⁸³

I suspect, indeed, one of the grounds on which Mr. James has reason of malcontentment, is the neglect of his maintenance. I think he has his own burdens on his

lands, beside that the quarterings this year, and some years bygone, hath made his rent small in itself, near to nothing; he has a numerous family, he has no stipend from Glasgow: I see not how he must not be straitened. Therefore, in the midst of all the scarcity that can be among yow, I advise, that without more delay, in the first day of Exchequer, yow appoint him a stipend at least of two hundred pounds....⁸⁴

We find the Commission of the General Assembly

74. Lachman, *ibid.*

75. The first policy, which in response to a query from parliament, conceded that under “the great and evident necessitie,” “a competent force’ could not be raised to oppose the English unless there was ‘a more generall calling forth of the bodie of the people then heretofore hath been.” This was the First Public Resolution. Holfelder, p. 85. The Second of May 24, repealed the Act of Classes.

76. The moderate Resolutioners on the commission, knowing parliament wanted full repeal of the Act of Classes, and knowing this would create a royalist government, dragged their feet for months. The Protesters tried to exploit this fear and proposed a union against the royalists, which in the end went nowhere. The commission finally gave the blessing the parliament wished on May 24, but with an attempted dodge, washing their hands of the consequences. “[I]t is not competent to us, but only to the King and Parliament, to make or repeal Acts of Parliament, and, therefore, that as the Commission of the Kirk had not hand in making of the Act of Classes, so neither doe we take upon us to determine the keeping up or rescinding or repealing of the same.” See Holfelder, p. 119, and pp. 112–121.

77. The parliament repealed the Act of Classes on June 2, 1651. Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1660*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1894), 1.392. With the repeal the royalists came back en masse and “now had control of parliament, the Committee of Estates and all the key parliamentary interval committees. The rule of the kirke regime had ended. Not surprisingly, this realignment of power resulted in a severe reduction in the kirk’s influence over the government.” Holfelder, “*Factionalism*,” p. 121.

78. The majority and larger party were the Resolutioners; “with the exception of the synod of Glasgow-Ayr and its respective presbyteries, virtually all of Scotland’s church courts were under the control of the Resolutioners.” Holfelder’s “*Factionalism*,” p. 14.

79. Baillie writes of his service to the king as “that grievous burden.” Baillie, 3.150.

80. “It is said Charles II. had a great veneration for him, and stood much in awe of him.” Wodrow, *Analecta*, 3.108.

81. Aye (always) glaiking. *Glaik*: light, giddy, foolish, sometimes with connotations of being flirtatious (See *Jamieson’s Scottish Dictionary*). The king had already begun having affairs at a young age and would eventually lay claim to around a dozen illegitimate children by half a dozen mistresses.

82. Publications of the Scottish History Society, Second Series, vol. XVIII, *The Diary of Sir Archibald Johnson of Wariston, Volume 2, 1650–1654*, edited by David Hay Fleming (Edinburgh: March 1919), p. 137.

83. See *61 Sermons*, pp. 74, 516, 721.

84. Baillie, 3.155. Durham’s family was housing with the family of Patrick Gillespie. Christie, p. 77.

granting on November 23, 1650, a respite for a time beginning December 1, due to his “present distemper and indisposition,” and appointed several ministers to that duty for four months, swapping out teams at two months.⁸⁵ This plan initially may have been upended, at least for a time, by the king’s request on November 28 that Durham return.⁸⁶ He may have returned, because rather than retiring for illness, he was active in the church’s affairs through the end of the year. He appears before the commission on December 12, when letters from the king and Parliament are produced and read, though it is not clear if he was acting as courier; and he serves on a committee to consider the Parliament’s letter. On December 13, Durham is appointed to preach to the parliament the next Lord’s Day.⁸⁷ He attended the meeting in the morning on December 14, but is not recorded attending in the afternoon. And he attended the commission on December 31 in Perth, as the king was to be crowned the next day at Scone.

This all took its toll, and after attending the

85. *Records for 1650–52*, pp. 117, 133, 234, 253, 335, 405, 420, 443, 549.

86. November 28, 1650, was the same day of the commission’s censure of the Remonstrants. *Records for 1650–52*, p. 420.

87. *Records for 1650–52*, p. 158. The Parliament met at Perth from November 26 to December 30, 1650. The records do not note a service or sermon, the parliament sitting on that day likely after any such service. *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, ed. K.M. Brown et al (St Andrews, 2007–2020), M1650/11/22. <http://www.rps.ac.uk/trans/M1650/11/22>. Date accessed: 4 March 2020. If this is the occasion in view in “Life,” the text was John 3:10. “While he served the Lord in the holy ministry, and particularly in that post and character of king’s chaplain, his great labor and ambition was, to be accepted of God, and have God’s favor and not the favor of great men; therefore he studied more to profit and edify their souls, than please and tickle their fancies, as some court parasites do in their sermons. One instance whereof was this. Being called, at a certain time, to preach before the parliament where many rulers were present, he preached from John 3:10. “Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?” That which he mostly insisted on before this august meeting, was, that it was a most unaccountable thing for rulers, nobles of Israel (a land of light, where divine light and revelation was, and where a great plenty of means of knowledge was) to be ignorant of, and unacquainted with these great and necessary things of regeneration, and being born again of the Spirit. And did most seriously press upon all, from the king to the beggar, to seek to know experimentally these things; an excellent pattern for all court ministers, and such as are called to preach at such public occasions. He continued with the king till he went to England.” “Life,” p. 33.

88. See the letter as given in “Life,” p. 34.

89. “Life,” pp. 35–36

90. *Records for 1650–52*, p. 420. Christie, 72, 73. “Life,” p. 36. Baillie, 3.165–166.

91. *Records for 1650–52*, p. 335.

92. Baillie, 3.148.

93. NLS, MS 664a, fourth page of contents.

94. Christie, p. 73.

commission on January 6, he likely made his condition known. The next day, January 7, when he was not in attendance, a replacement was appointed during his illness. On January 22 the commission promised an answer to Durham’s request of a furlough at the next meeting; however, they did not answer until March. At the same time in late January (which came first is unclear), the common session of Glasgow wrote in an undated letter asking that he might return to ministry there.⁸⁸ Durham’s desire was to fill the chair of theology that had previously been offered him, and his friends believed he had been ill treated when it was denied him.

On March 18, the commission finally granted liberty to Durham “for his health and private affairs, to withdraw himself from his service and charge in attending the King and his family” for six weeks. He attended no other meetings of the commission though he was appointed to various committees to answer this or that need or correspondence. By the beginning of April, Durham was back in Glasgow.⁸⁹ On April 19, Cromwell suddenly came to Glasgow and heard “Mr. John Carstairs lecture, and Mr. James Durham preach, graciously and well to the times as could have been desired. Generally, all who preached that day in the Towne gave a fair enough testimony against the Sectaries.” Old Ironsides got the message and in a meeting with the ministers the next day complained that the English were “condemned 1st, As unjust invaders”, etc.⁹⁰

On April 23, 1651, the commission appointed more ministers to “attend the Kings [*sic*] family by courses, and to be assisting to Mr. James Durham for performing all ministerial duties to them.” Whether at this time and since January, Durham returned sporadically to the king, assisted by these and others, or they simply stood in for him, is not clear. Christie writes that Durham returned to the king for two months in May (Christie, 73), apparently presuming he did so after the March 18 liberty expired. Durham appears to be in Sterling on May 16, where the king and the army were;⁹¹ but in a March 31 letter to Glasgow about taking up a position in the university, his language seems to indicate he was freed up until the meeting of the assembly at the end of July.⁹² There is a manuscript lecture on Psalm 39 amongst sermons and lectures by James Guthrie dating to mid to late May, 1651, presumably given in Glasgow.⁹³ Christie states that he continued “occupied with the business of the Commission of Assembly.... met their deputation to his Majesty and discussed ... signing of the Covenant by his English friends, ... and conferring with those ministers who had been prisoners in the Tower of London....”⁹⁴ On May 24 he is listed as appointed

to go to the king with others of the commission, but he is not noted as in attendance of the commission. Despite Durham and his friends writing letters and campaigning for the Glasgow university appointment, Baillie appears to have successfully blocked this effort, believing it would be a disservice to the king and not stand Durham or the church well. By sometime in July it is clear he had not been with the king, and having recovered his health, had determined to return. Durham wrote to Robert Douglas on July 14, 1651, expressing his intent to take up again his charge once more as the King's chaplain.

I was once in doubt whither to have staid till the Assembly or not; but being recovered in my health, and not knowing who may be with the King, I have resolved, upon Mr. Blair's advice, to go immediately to that charge, until the Assembly dispose of me and it, as shall be thought best. I doubt not when men are to be named, but ye will be careful to see them such as that task require, which I ingenuously confess does not only require more zeal, faithfulness and abilities than I have, but more than I could have thought of before experience of the snares and discouragements which accompany it.⁹⁵

In light of this letter of July 14, Durham does not appear to have attended the summer meeting of General Assembly slated to begin July 16 in St. Andrews, as he was attempting to return to the king's side. Parliament had already passed censures on lay persons who had supported the Remonstrance, and it became clear the assembly was intent on doing something as well. "Censured and barred from election ... twenty-two ministers including Samuel Rutherford and James Guthrie handed in a Protestation" which declared the assembly invalid for not being free and lawful.⁹⁶ The assembly upon hearing of the news of the defeat at Inverkeithing, moved to Dundee, but none of the Protesters attended and the assembly packed with royalists repealed the Act of Classes and deposed from the ministry James Guthrie, Patrick Gillespie and several others that signed the Remonstrance.⁹⁷ If he had been free to attend, Durham may have followed Blair's example as to the Dundee meeting, who decided to distance himself from the meeting.

When the Assembly reconvened at Dundee on 22 July, it had lost approximately half its members. The Protesters were absent to a man and many moderates were prevented from attending because of English troop

movements. Others, such as the centrist Robert Blair, appear to have withdrawn because they did not wish to be associated with the Assembly's proceedings. Many of those who remained were obscure royalist ministers from Fife and the north-east. Unlike their more moderate colleagues, these men had little respect for the Remonstrants. During the 1640s, such ministers had kept a low profile in order to escape the purges of zealous radicals. Now, with the situation reversed, they prepared to give full vent to their animosity towards the Remonstrants.⁹⁸

Durham's exact whereabouts between July 14 and a September–October meeting of the Protesters could not be specifically traced. However, it is said he offered to go with the king to England but he refused, and the armies departed on July 31, and Durham returned to Glasgow.⁹⁹ Wariston records hearing about this on August 4,¹⁰⁰ so it is impossible to proclaim with certainty that Durham did not attend the Dundee assembly. Wariston in reviewing the 1651 Dundee assembly's *Warning and Declaration*, tries to read who contributed what to it, and spied "policy and prudence of Douglas, zeal in David Dickson, against separation, and sharpness of James Wood or James Durham."¹⁰¹ There is no indication Wariston knew for sure Durham was present and he suggests either Durham or Wood for the sharpness. However, it would seem unlikely, if Blair had decided against attending the assembly, that Durham would not have done the same, so as not to be tied to any extreme action they took. But even if he was there, it hardly seems likely he would have contributed 'sharpness' to the document, if by that Wariston meant severity versus intelligence. This is because Durham in his July 14 letter to Douglas advised taking no censorious course with the Remonstrants.

I can say little of the public, being almost afraid of every event I can think of; yet, if God would bless some overtures I heard from Mr. Blaire, of waving all bypast debates at this time, by entering on a new

95. Baillie, *Letters & Journals*, 3.560. Durham also wrote to Robert Douglas who was at Sterling, May 15, and May 23, 1651. Wodrow MS Folio 25.

96. Lachman, "Protesters," p. 681.

97. *Life of Robert Blair*, p. 278.

98. Holfelder, "Factionalism," pp. 127–128.

99. Durham "offered to goe with the king ... but not finding suiteable acceptance, he returned to Glasgow..." *Select Biographies*, p. 332; Wariston, *Diary*, II, p. 104. Christie, p. 73.

100. Wariston, *Diary*, II, 105.

101. Wariston, *Diary*, II, 111.

ground, I think it the only way of healing; whereas, if things shall conclude by hotness, after debate, it doth not cure that evil, but will readily bring on acts and censures on men, which will be of greater scandal to the Church, in my judgment, than the thing debated, and may probably draw more favourers, out of desire to suffer, with some, and by others, whereby many will be deemed to act by another principle in that than the present controversy.¹⁰²

102. Baillie, 1.560.

103. Christie, p. 73. Wariston, *Diary*, II, 105.

104. Johnson's diary entry is dated August 4, 1651. *Diary*, II, p. 105. The brief commission records for the meetings at Dundee on August 1–12, 1651 do not mention this, so this may have been at the actual General Assembly at Dundee in late July, but this is not noted in Peterkin's record. The minutes for both were seized by the English and are missing. The personal account of some of the assembly's actions preserved by Wodrow does not mention Durham. Peterkin, *Records of the Kirk of Scotland containing Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies, from 1638...* (Edinburgh: Peter Brown, 1843), p. 631. *Records 1650–52*, p. 513.

105. *Diary*, II, p. 106.

106. William Ferrie, *Letters and correspondence of John Carstairs together with the letters of some of his contemporaries: To which is prefixed an account of his life* (1843; Robert Ogle and Oliver and Boyd, 1846), pp. 77–78. The need for Durham's services may have arisen in late July when "the Governors of the University agreed to relieve the Principal and Professors from their parochial charges, and this seemed to offer an opening, but Durham's mind was intent upon a chair as his right. Unfortunately, when the chair fell vacant by Ramsay's death in the autumn, other influences, especially the English, came into play, and he did not receive the appointment. A call of sorts was presented to him to serve in the Inner Kirk "from time to time, but in a louse way." Christie, p. 74.

107. Baillie, *Letters & Journals*, Memoir of Baillie, 1.lxvi. Scott gives the date of the call as September 4. Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, v. 3, p. 456. The Glasgow council approved the call on September 6, and appointed men to deliver the call on September 13. *Memorabilia of the City of Glasgow: Selected from the Minute Books of the Burgh. MDLXXXVIII–MDCCL* (Printed for Private Circulation, 1835), p. 552.

108. Cf. *Letters & Journals*, 3.238. Wariston records hearing of Ramsay's death on September 8, and while he likely would not have heard of Durham's call, his comment regarding Durham being deprived of all public ministry because he would not take sides, but strove to unite them, is in keeping with Wariston's general tendency to read providence through the glasses of his own opinions and interests. Publications of the Scottish History Society, Third Series, vol. XXXIV, *The Diary of Sir Archibald Johnson of Wariston, Volume 3, 1655–1660*, edited by James D. Ogilvie (Edinburgh: 1940), p. xxxii. "I heard of M. R. Ramsey's sudden death in Glasgow, which will help to settle that presbytery. He has not long brooked [enjoyed] M. J. Durham's place, whom he caused putt out, howbeit the Lord had a hand in it to cast M. J. D. loose of all charge for his politic halting betwixt two opinions." *Diary*, II, p. 132.

109. John Carstairs was ordained and entered the ministry at Cathcart, November 17, 1647. He was transferred to Outer Kirk of Glasgow Cathedral, first set apart in 1649 with Patrick Gillespie as minister, serving a collegiate charge with Gillespie from June 5, 1650, and then

In the defeat of the Scottish army at Inverkeithing on July 20, Charles saw in the English army advancing north an opportunity to invade England. He marched his royalist army south attempting to gather troops on the way. As noted, Durham may have attempted to join the king between July 14 when he wrote to Douglas and the king's resolve to head toward England after July 20. After the king's refusal of his service,¹⁰³ by August 4, Durham had left and gone to Glasgow. The assembly at Dundee ordered three other ministers to attend him instead.¹⁰⁴ Johnson writes, "I thought it strange to hear that there was not one minister to go on with the King or army, except deposed ministers, albeit the meeting at St. Jhonston [in Perth] was most willing to send them, as there was none in 1648, when I heard that, even at Torwood, there was no evening nor morning prayers in the camp, and far less now."¹⁰⁵ On August 22, Charles' army arrived at Worcester and was subsequently routed on September 3, 1651. The king managed to escape to Europe.

DURHAM'S RETURN TO MINISTRY IN GLASGOW

OCTOBER 19, 1651–JUNE 25, 1658

Relieved of his burden, and also having not been reappointed at the end of July to the Assembly's commission, Durham was free of those duties as well. While it is not clear there was any real place for him, John Carstairs as moderator of the Glasgow session, wrote to Durham on August 28, 1651, imploring and practically ordering him to please come and serve the people there as one of their ministers.¹⁰⁶ Then, just a few days later on September 4, Robert Ramsay died, and that same day the session issued a call to Durham to the Inner Kirk (of the Glasgow Cathedral church).¹⁰⁷ But it was not until September 13 that men were appointed to deliver that call. With Ramsey's death Durham pressed a final time for the university position, but even this time with Baillie's support, he was denied it for good.¹⁰⁸ He accepted the call to the Inner Kirk, and his companion in ministry there would be John Carstairs.¹⁰⁹ Durham spent the rest of his few years of ministry and life in this service, where he did the work for which he is most known.

The specific date on which Durham accepted this call to Glasgow is not clear. It seems likely that he did not begin his new charge until mid-October. The Protector-Resolutioner controversy was in full swing, and Durham was heavily involved. "In mid-September, they [Patrick Gillespie and the Glasgow Protesters], together with the centrist James Durham, wrote letters far and wide inviting all who were in known sympathy with their cause to a national meeting in Glasgow on 23–24

September.”¹¹⁰ This meeting failed to attract the needed interest, but Gillespie immediately called for another gathering to meet in Edinburgh, which was successful, gaining the attendance of 62 ministers by September 30, including Durham.

Extract from Mercurius Scoticus, Tuesday (Sept. 30). This day the Protestant Ministers of Scotland, and those that adhered to it, met at Edinburgh, and (as is supposed) intend to enter upon no Public Business till the next Week, and to spend the remainder of this Week in Supplication and Fasting to the Lord, every man in particular laying out his own guiltiness, in relation as well to the Public as his own private interest (Mr. James Durham being the first man), that they may be able to read his will in all his dispensations towards this Land; and the next Week to proceed upon business of the Assembly (as is supposed) and other Public business, in order to the department of the People in the midst of these troublous times.¹¹¹

Durham attended the debates for much of the week, but by Saturday, October 11, Wariston notes that he had departed.¹¹² Given his travels, he may or may not have preached on October 12 back in Glasgow. As already noted, he had been preaching on occasion in Glasgow up to the point of commencing and taking up the formal call, during his on and off again service to the king as chaplain.¹¹³ Perhaps the first sermon as minister of the Inner Kirk at the cathedral was one preached on October, 19, 1651. This was the first sermon on chapter two of Song of Solomon. While he does not make an explicit reference to a prior Lord’s Day sermon on October 12, it seems clear he likely had at least addressed the substance of the book if not of chapter one, because he begins the sermon, “[Whe]n we began to speak of this book we show[ed] that it was taken up in [som]e short sweet conferences betwixt Christ and his Bride or believers...”¹¹⁴

Why did Durham in beginning his ministry in Glasgow, start preaching in chapter two of the book of Song of Solomon? This is because he was preaching from chapter one of Song of Solomon as his “ordinary text,” when either preaching to the king and his family or when in Glasgow in the time away from that duty. We know this from a record left of the topic on which he preached, when in April 1651, as noted previously, Cromwell appeared suddenly in Glasgow.

While I was at the college, the English army came to Glasgow, and King Charles was at Stirling with an army.

Many of the army came to the church. General Cromwell came himself with his Lieutenant-General Lambert. They came into the outer church in the afternoon, very gravely and reverently, and were set down in a seat opposite to the pulpit. I saw them all the time and they sat very reverently. I heard Mr. Durham who was then the king’s chaplain. He preached on his ordinary text. Song 1, last verse [1:17].¹¹⁵

From the published works, it is clear Durham preached multiple sermons on a single verse, and he likely completed preaching on chapter one either on that occasion or on whatever occasions he had to preach between then and taking the call to the Inner Kirk. When he began preaching regularly again, while he perhaps alludes to a prior sermon or sermons preached in summary or sporadically on chapter one, he does not begin again, but picks up where he left off with chapter two, and continued a considerable series of 228 sermons on Song of Solomon chapters 2–8, finishing sometime in about November of 1655.¹¹⁶ He would also lecture on

moved to the collegiate charge with Durham in the Inner Kirk, April 26, 1655.

110. Holfelder, “Factionalism,” p. 137.

111. Scottish History Society, volume 18, *Scotland and the Commonwealth. Letters and Papers relating to the Military Government of Scotland, from August 1651 to December 1653*, edited with introduction and notes by C. H. Firth (Edinburgh: Printed at the University Press by T. and A. Constable for the Scottish History Society, 1895), p. 327. See also Holfelder, “Factionalism,” pp. 137–138.

112. *Diary*, II, p. 149.

113. This paragraph refines previous material regarding when Durham commenced his call and began preaching on the Song of Solomon, where it was cast as too doubtful that Durham preached prior to October 19. Cf. “*Antiquary: The James Durham MS III: James Durham’s 228 Sermons on Song of Solomon 2–8*,” *The Confessional Presbyterian* volume 13 (2017): 229.

114. Sermons on the Song of Solomon, manuscript, MSS 01203, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Toronto, Canada. The left margin of the text was slightly out of shot in the photograph kindly provided and the letters have been surmised and inserted. Durham may still have been referring to some sermon prior to October 12, but it remains unclear at this time if he preached on October 12 and whether his text was from Song of Solomon.

115. “Mr. Gabriel Semple, ‘Life,’” Scottish History Society, Fifth Series, volume 15, *Protestant Piety in Early-Modern Scotland: Letters, Lives and Covenants*, ed. David George Mullan (Edinburgh: Printed for the Scottish History Society, 2008), p. 143.

116. See the *Chronology* in *Antiquary*. Durham likely finished the series in the latter half of 1655. With thirty sermons remaining, the last dated sermon is dated March 11, 1655. See the multiple manuscripts and listing of sermons given in “*Antiquary: The James Durham MS III: James Durham’s 228 Sermons on Song of Solomon 2–8*,” *The Confessional Presbyterian* 13 (2017): 197–204. No manuscript of sermons on chapter one has been found at this writing, and given the constant moving around during his chaplaincy, notes may not have been taken

the same book of Canticles, though less fully.¹¹⁷ He preached and lectured on other texts, including lecturing upon the whole book of Revelation from February 1653 until possibly May 1655. Thus, Durham began his ministry in Glasgow by tackling two of the most “mysterious”¹¹⁸ books of Scripture at the same time.

JAMES DURHAM’S WORK AS MINISTER

Given the scope of Durham’s published works it seems hard to believe he could have accomplished it all in such a short ministry. However, despite Baillie’s characterization of the terms of his call to Glasgow as “from time to time, but in a loose way,” Durham hardly seems to have been underutilized, and that despite the terms of the

of these sermons. In addition, there are copies of eight sermons on chapters 4, 5 and 7 in a manuscript not noticed in the article just cited. The other sermons in the volume are known to be Durham’s and the dating and numbering of these aligns with other manuscripts of the sermons on Canticles. The MS contains published and unpublished material. See in the bibliography, “Sermons (1651),” Westminster College Archives, Cambridge University, in Durham, *Commentary on Revelation*, volume 3, p. 582.

117. Margaret Durham writes in her dedication of the Song of Solomon lectures, that at the importunity of hearers of the sermons, Durham went through the whole book again with more brevity in the Lord’s Day lecture. James Durham, *Clavis Cantici; Or, an Exposition of the Song of Solomon* (1668; Aberdeen: King, 1840; rpr. Banner of Truth, 1982), p. 16.

118. “[T]he churches of Christ are obliged to God in this, that they have had from this bright candle amongst the Lord’s candlesticks, a light shining upon and discovering those two mysterious Books of Scripture, Canticles, and Revelation.” Carstares preface, *Clavis Cantici* (1668).

119. John Carstares, To the Judicious and Christian Reader, *Commentary upon the Book of Revelation*, Lectures on Chapters 1–3 (2020), p. 20, n3. See also Christie, p. 76.

120. Gray died on February 8, 1656. It is not clear who assisted Gillespie from Gray’s death until MacWard’s call. He may have shouldered the full duties as Durham apparently had until Carstares’ transfer. Gillespie had ingratiated himself with Cromwell by his willingness to debate and for his sympathy with Congregationalist ministers, and Cromwell had him installed as principal of the university in place of Baillie. See Alexander D. Campbell, *The Life and Works of Robert Baillie (1602–1662)* (The Boydell Press, 2017), p. 54.

121. Hew Scott, *Faſti Eccleſiæ Scoticanæ*, volume 2, part 1 (Edinburgh: William Patterson, [1868]), pp. 5, 20, 22. *Faſti Eccleſiæ Scoticanæ*, New Edition, volume III (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1920), pp. 456–57, 462, 465.

122. From the few known dated sermons, it appears for the most part that Durham preached on the Old Testament in the morning (Song of Solomon, Isaiah 53), and New Testament in the afternoon (Colossians). See the *Chronology* in Antiquary.

123. Carstares, To the Judicious and Christian Reader, p. 20. Carstares, To the Christian Reader, *A Practical Exposition of the Ten Commandments* (Naphtali Press and Reformation Heritage Books, 2018), p. xli.

call, he was fully employed in the service of the Inner Kirk. John Carstares described the ministry of Durham in noting that when lecturing on Revelation he also,

all that time he did also preach twice a week at least, and moſt ordinarily thrice, beſide his daily public lecturing every fifth week according to his courſe in the city, and all his other miniſterial duties of catechizing, viſiting of the ſick, exhorting of the whole from houſe to houſe, and his weekly meetings with the congregational eldership for the exerciſe of diſcipline, moſt dexterouſly, faithfully, condeſcendingly and indefatigably diſcharged by him towards about fifteen hundred ſouls, of whom he alone as miniſter had the overſight.¹¹⁹

This appears to be describing Durham’s work as minister of the Inner Kirk in Glasgow Cathedral before Carstares himself joined him as co-paſtor. Several of the Glasgow churches had “collegiate charges,” where additional or co-ministers worked together. For instance, Patrick Gillespie was called to be the minister of the Outer High Kirk in the Glasgow Cathedral in 1648 as its firſt minister when that division of the ſpace in the cathedral was ſet up, to which were added two collegiate miniſters to ſhare the work. This was John Carſtares in 1650, and after Gillespie was inſtalled by Cromwell as principal of Glasgow University on April 14, 1653, Andrew Gray was added in November 1653, and Robert MacWard in June 1656.¹²⁰ There was not a collegiate colleague for Durham until Carſtares transferred to the Inner Kirk on April 26, 1655. So, for three and half years he apparently had the ſole reſponſibility of the work aſſigned to the Inner Kirk miniſter, and then from that point until the end of his miniſtry he had John Carſtares as a co-paſtor to divide the work.¹²¹ Therefore, before Carſtares joined him, in addition to the catechizing and other work, Durham had the reſponſibility for two ſermons each Lord’s Day,¹²² a Lord’s Day morning lecture before ſermon, at leaſt one weekday ſermon, moſt commonly Tuesday, or Thursday, though early on there are a few Saturday ſermons, and every fifth week his ſhare of the month’s daily lectures in the city. As far as more ſpecific information, we alſo have Carſtares’ ſtatements that the lectures on Revelation were given “within a very ſhort time, one of them every Lord’s Day,” and ſimilarly that thoſe on the Ten Commandments “were Sabbath-day morning lectures before ſermon.”¹²³

There are precious few dates aſſociated with Durham’s ſermons and lectures to conſtruct a complete picture, but there are enough to attempt to approximate

a preaching and lecturing *Chronology*¹²⁴ for his ministry in Glasgow. However, two descriptions provided by Carstares are problematic.

The Revelation lectures commenced on February 6, 1653, and appear to have been given over a longer stretch of time than Carstares indicates, which if taken at face value and one lecture per Lord's Day seriatim assumed, would have placed Durham completing the 94 lectures by November, 1654.¹²⁵ However, one manuscript notebook by George Maxwell records the single lecture on Revelation 10 as having been given on March 12, 1654.¹²⁶ This indicates a slower pace and presents almost enough time, with a few extra missed weeks, to presume that when Durham had every fifth week of lecturing in the city, that he did not lecture on the Lord's Day that week. Whether he did or did not, and there may have been other and less regular reasons for the longer time, this assumption most easily accommodates the creation of a best guess at how the various sermon and lecture series unfolded during Durham's ministry. If correct, all the known lecture series of any length on Job, Revelation, Ten Commandments and Song of Solomon, fit into the period of his ministry with about fourteen or sixteen weeks to spare and assuming a curtailing or ceasing of ministry at the end of 1657 and into 1658 when his health would have been giving away. If the assumption is not correct and some other reason accounts for the skipped dates, then there are approximately 62 or 63 more weeks that could have been filled with lecturing for which there is no record of additional series to take up that much time. Or even if he had been taking the fifth week off, after Carstares became his co-pastor, if he may have ceased that practice, that would add approximately 30 weeks of lectures open for additional material. But again, that would also mean there is a significant amount of unknown material for which, at least at this time, there is no record. Therefore, from what is known presently, this assumption of a skipped Lord's Day morning lecture every fifth week after Durham had spent the prior weekdays lecturing in the city, most simply reconciles the dates that we do know.

The other problematic description Carstares gives is of the lectures on the Ten Commandments, which is also difficult to square with the few dates that are known. Carstares writes in apologizing for the brevity of the lectures on the second table of the law, that they were

for anything I know, never by him intended for the press. Otherwise it had been much more full; for he is much shorter on the commands of the second table than on those of the first, touching

only on some chief heads, not judging it fit belike at that time and in that exercise, to wit, Sabbath-day morning lectures before sermon, to dwell long on that subject (which a particular prosecution would have necessitated him to); especially since he was at that same time to the same auditory preaching sabbath afternoons on the third chapter of the epistle to the Colossians, a subject much of the same nature.¹²⁷

This more than implies that Durham lectured on the Ten Commandments at the time he was preaching on Colossians chapter three. However, Durham was more toward the end of an apparent series on Colossians 3 when Maxwell records that in addition to the Revelation lecture on chapter 10, that he preached in the afternoon on Colossians 3:17. Using the average length of the Revelation manuscript lectures as a guide, the lectures on the commandments would amount to possibly as many as 52 or 54 lectures. There is simply not enough time to allow inserting them somewhere before, or in the middle of the Revelation lectures if a break is assumed, given the known beginning date of that series and the specific date Maxwell records for the lecture on Revelation 10. Carstares must rather be seen to mean, that since Durham had already preached on similar second table issues in the Colossians series, there was less reason for Durham to have repeated that material when he lectured on the commandments, which likely began right after the completion of those on Revelation, given the connection Carstares makes to the sermon series on Colossians.

The lectures on Canticles were delivered, according to Mrs. Durham, after her husband's sermons on that book were finished. This would have to place them after the Revelation lectures, which ran during and completed before that sermon series ended, and after those on the Ten Commandments, which must have immediately followed to best reconcile Carstares statement. It is therefore most likely that some time had passed and that the lectures on Canticles were not taken up until around June of 1656, when Durham was preaching on Isaiah 53.

With all this predicated, and with the few dates

124. See the Chronological Catalog in *Antiquary* in this issue.

125. New College Library, Archives and Manuscripts. MSS Rev. 2. Commentary on the Revelation, chapter 1–11. Quarto. No pagination. 40opp. The first sermon is dated, 6 Feb. 1653.

126. Notes by George Maxwell, Collection, Maxwells of Pollok, Glasgow and Renfrew, 16 items/notebooks; T-PM/114/3 c. 1652–1656, Glasgow City Archives, Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

127. To the Christian Reader, p. xli.

provided by manuscripts or other sources, along with other dates and historical facts, some approximation may be given of how the six years of at least Durham's preaching and teaching ministry in the Inner Kirk may have unfolded, which the Chronological Catalog presented in *Antiquary* in this issue attempts to do. Most of the focus in this Chronology is on the Lord's Day services. But as noted, each Glasgow minister also had at least one weekday preaching the daily sermon at the cathedral during the week. Durham is known to have preached Tuesday, Thursday, and apparently some Saturday sermons. While there are very few dated manuscripts that are identifiable as weekday sermons, happily a manuscript provides dates for some early Tuesday sermons, including what appears to be the first. In addition to two Lord's Day sermons, Durham also lectured each

Lord's Day; but, as argued, the Chronology presumes that every fifth Lord's Day the lecture is skipped due to Durham's share of the daily city lectures the prior week. Apparently, the Glasgow ministers all took a share of these lectures. These were likely series on books of the Bible. A single known "fifth" lecture on Acts 15 by Durham may imply a series of significant size that is not easy to fit the timeframe as Lord's Day lectures (see the Bibliography in Durham on Revelation, vol. 3, p. 582). Whatever the case, skipping a week was an effective solution to expand the timeframe of Durham's lectures as the dating seems to require, without pondering more complex theories. Although it may be largely speculative, this Chronology, and the full bibliography of his works (*ibid.*, p. 525–584) clearly present the magnitude of Durham's labors over six years of ministry. ■

In Brief: Dr. Alexander And Immersionism by Rev. R.L. Dabney, D.D., as published in *The Christian Observer*, 60.3 (19 January 1881): page 1, column 5.

I have seen the preposterous paragraph from the *Examiner and Chronical*, touching Dr. Archibald Alexander's supposed conviction in favor of immersionism. Here is an authentic incident in his life, which may show how absurd this notion is. It was given me by my venerable friend, Mrs. John H. Rice. During a part of the time Dr. Alexander was the youthful president of Hampden Sidney College, the Rev. Conrad Speece and John H. Rice were tutors or professors under him. Being bachelors, they lodged in the same room and the same bed in the college. Mr. Speece had become entangled in the dogmatism of the Immersionists, and had been rebaptized by them, by dipping, in Buffalo Creek near by. But the Presbyterians, resolving to treat him with the fullest liberality, and respecting the sincerity of his convictions, continued him in his post.

One night about nine o'clock, said Dr. Rice, the president knocked at their door. Being invited in, he took a seat, and began a pleasant and somewhat jocular conversation. Soon he asked Mr. Speece a question touching some leading position of the Immersionists. The professor took up the gauntlet with a sort of surly promptitude, and made an aggressive reply. Rice saw a merry twinkle in "Little Archy's" expressive eye, and surmised that a rare fencing match was begun. It was continued until long after midnight. Dr. Alexander pursuing mainly the Socratic method, and entangling his gruff adversary more hopelessly with

every answer. Rice listened and laughed until he was weary, and then quietly undressed and betook himself to bed, while the debate still went on. At last Dr. A. got up and bade them a cheery good night, with the remark, that he reckoned Janetta was beginning to think it was time a married man like him was at home. After sitting long in moody meditation over the fire, Speece also went to bed. He was in body, a big, ox-like German. All the rest of the night he lay, puffing and growling, like old Dr. Sam. Johnson, and flinging himself from side to side, giving the cover vicious jerks, much to Rice's discomfort. At length he said, "Speece, what is the matter? Why don't you sleep?"

"Because," he growled in reply, "the little villain has not left me an inch of ground to stand upon."

The result was that after a time, and thorough re-examination of the arguments, Dr. Speece repudiated his immersionism, and came heartily back into the Presbyterian Church and ministry. There he ever after maintained through a glorious and able ministry, the doctrines of pedo-baptism, being all the more hearty and firm in their support, because of his early trials about them.

This true history may also illustrate the amounts of truth usually contained in the romantic tales of persecutions by Pedo-baptists, undergone by Immersionists for the truth's sake of their gospel. Speece, during his secession, was treated with a Christian generosity, which was impervious to his surly, belligerent temper at that time.

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