

in 1860, and it shows a very modern-looking article. It is made of a bright alloy, containing a good deal of nickel or tin; it is cleanly cut, and well ornamented. It is a little smaller than the 1840 issue. On the obverse is printed in bold letters "Parish Church of Rothesay;" on the reverse the same inscription as before:—"This do in remembrance of me; 1 Cor. xi., 24." These tokens, along with the remainder of the 1840 ones, were in use in Rothesay up till about 60 years ago.

In the course of my peregrinations in the Museum, I have noticed that the tokens of the Parish Church are rather inadequately represented. In view of its long association with the town, this is a notable lack. While there is an almost complete set of its tokens to be seen in the vestibule of the Church, it is but fitting that there should also be a set here in the Museum. Accordingly, I shall be honoured if these exhibits are accepted to supplement the ones already possessed, thereby providing for exhibition here a complete set of the existing tokens of Rothesay Parish Church.

ROTHESAY FROM THE TIME OF THE COMMONWEALTH TO THE REVOLUTION.

By R. D. WHYTE.

[Read 1st March, 1938.]

While we in Rothesay are proud to possess the Charters of 1400-1 and 1584, it is unfortunate that the early local records have been lost, these having been removed by Cromwell's troops. The Town Council records go back to 1654, the Kirk Session records to 1658. The Sheriff Court books begin in 1673, those of the Commissioners of Supply in 1678, while those of the Justices of the Peace do not begin till 1707. It is particularly unfortunate that we have no records to show what part the burgesses played in the great struggle which started with the signing of the National Covenant in 1638. We know that the Covenant was signed on behalf of the burgesses by Matthew Spens, Notary Public, Bailie, Commissioner to the Convention of Burgh and to Parliament,¹ that, Sir James Stewart, the Sheriff of Bute, at the beginning of the Civil War, garrisoned the Castle, and at his own expense furnished a body of soldiers from his estate to the King, though apparently the Castle was taken and held for a time by the Covenanters,² that men from Rothesay fought with the Covenanting Army at Inverlochy and that Alisdair Macdonald, having with half his Irish and all his Highlanders, left Montrose after the Battle of Kilsyth with the view of conducting a campaign in Argyle which should root the Campbells out of the Peninsula,³ carried his plundering

1. Hewison's Bute in the Olden Time, II.—326. and for further particulars concerning Matthew Spens see Transactions of this Society. III., p. 45.

2. Blain's History, p. 297.

3. Buchan—"Montrose."

expedition into Bute, and that Cromwell's soldiers occupied the Castle, and before leaving rendered it useless as a fortress.

The presence of soldiers in the town probably did not make things easier for the civil inhabitants. One wonders if the excuse of Patrick Campbell in Ardbeg that he was not competent to undertake the duties of Treasurer "be reasons of wanting learneing and the English language," was really genuine. He was obviously anxious to escape the duty, for he offered to give up the "band" of twenty marks given by the Council for money lent by him to the town "for furnishing sojourns to Inverlochrie," if they would undertake never to elect him Treasurer. The Treasurer's duties were not very pleasant with so much money to be raised for extra-ordinary expenses, e.g., £314¹ for "outreik of the soldiers that was demandit be (Col.) M'Naichtan and (Lieut. Col.) M'Vicar." When Charles M'Kechnie was chosen, on 17th October, 1655, to collect 3 months cess he had to get the assistance of "a sojour." The presence of soldiers was a costly luxury and not popular, and the same Charles M'Kechnie declined to pay his share of the billet money until decerned to do so by the Burgh Court.

The Cess or Land Tax was a tax laid upon land. The monthly sum of £72,000 Scots or £6,000 Stg. became the unit of taxation, of which about one-sixth was paid by the Burghs. In 1649 the tax roll of the Royal Burghs showed the sum due by Rothesay to be £54 Scots, or £4 10s Stg., and usually 3 or 4 months cess was levied at one time. Sometimes to augment their slender income the Town Council levied somewhat more than what was necessary for cess and applied the balance to Burgh purposes. In these days the above amount may seem a very small sum as the town's

1. Scots—or £26 3s 4d Stg. Unless mentioned Scots money is referred to throughout this paper.

contribution to the national exchequer, but it evidently meant a great deal then, for the town was small and far removed from any centre of business activity. A journey to or from Rothesay to the business centres on the mainland was long and expensive—by sea to Greenock or boat from Rothesay to Toward,¹ then by the ferry from Dunoon to the Cloch, or to Ayrshire by ferry at Scoulag, where the ferry man had to "maintain a sufficient ferry boat with her furniture and all the other material necessary for the ferry, and also to have sufficient meat, drink and bedding for all persons coming to and from the ferry."² Like many another Royal Burgh, the town had difficulty in maintaining its status. It had been excused from attending the Convention of Burghs. It was fined for not producing the rental of its common lands. It was fined for absence from the Convention. "The time was one of deep poverty for its common people. The bonnet-lairds and the tacksmen, the labourers and shepherds, the petty craftsmen in the villages, even the burghers in the little town lived very near the edge of destitution," says John Buchan.³ Rothesay did not differ from the rest of Scotland.

In 1655 Thomas Tucker was appointed by Cromwell and his Council of State as Commissioner for the Excise and Customs Department, and he made a report on the trade in certain towns in Scotland. He did not mention Rothesay by name, but he reported of Bute—"A small island lyeing in the mouth of the Firth under which some vessells in stormy weather shelter themselves, but passe afterwards up the river. The inhabitants are all countrymen and cowheards who feede cattell and spinne and make some woollen clothe which (is) carryed to bee dyed and dressed at Glasgow."⁴ One wonders if

1. A ferry boat at one time plied between Bute and Cowal, the ferryman of which received a boll of barley yearly, until 1445 when the auditors ordered the payment to be discontinued—Exchequer Rolls, V., p. 87. 2. Sheriff Court Book (M.S.).

3. "Montrose."

4. Marwick, *The River Clyde*, p. 95.

Tucker actually visited Bute. A Commission had been appointed by the Convention of Burghs in 1649 to visit Rothesay to see the form of the election of the Magistrates. It reported in 1655 that, in respect of the distinction of the times and that those called "Tories" continually frequented the place it could not venture to go thither.¹ There were common grazing grounds on the East and West sides of the town. Herds were appointed to herd cattle at 16s Scots per head. Owners were not to keep cattle within the town unless they had grass to sustain them. Sheep were to be moved out of the town in April, and horses were not to be grazed on the commons after first June. No one was to keep fowls to the injury of his neighbour, and owners of fowls doing injury were to pay 4s with liberty to the party injured to slay the fowls and take them for their own use. Turf was not to be cut for fuel to the injury of the common pasturage. Liberty was granted to any person to erect pound faultds on their ground to impound any animals from wandering, the owners of the pounded animals to pay a groat for each animal before they got their animals restored to them, one half to go to the owner injured, the other half to the judge. The grinding of corn was an important industry when all used oatmeal. Following on a judgment² in favour of the Sheriff, Sir Dougall Stewart, against the tenant of Boganie for abstracting his grindable corn from the Mill of Rothesay, the Burgh Court passed a decree in favour of Sir Dougall ordaining the inhabitants to bring all their grindable corn to the Mill of Rothesay and pay multure and knaveship therefor. No wonder that the general impression created was that the inhabitants were "countrymen and cowherds who feed cattle." But the Town Council succeeded where other Burghs failed, and successfully steered the little town through a very difficult time.

1. Convention Records.

2. 18/1/1667.

During the Civil War there was interference with the Burghs and suspension of the Annual Elections, and so we find that in 1653 and 1654 (the first of the minutes) no election had taken place. Indeed, in 1654 an ordinance had been passed at the instance of that section of the clergy called the "protesters," giving power to Commissioners to appoint Magistrates and Councillors in the Burghs. The purpose of the "Protesters" was to gain control of the civil power, and especially to secure a change in the Magistrates of Glasgow.¹ An Election was, however, held here on 24th September, 1655. The Council consisted of 27 members, and included Sir James Stewart and Mr Patrick Stewart, who were marked "extra." Mr Patrick Stewart, of Roseland, was the son of John Stewart, Commissary of the Isles. He was one of the largest proprietors in Rothesay, and the senior Parish Minister of Rothesay. He demitted office in 1650 on account of old age, but enjoyed the fruits of the benefice till 25th August, 1657, when he was deposed for swearing at his mother-in-law! Now, no order had apparently been secured for holding this election, and on 17th October Duncan Kerr, who had been a Baillie, demitted his office "in regard thair was no new ordour granted for a new electione." But next year Kerr presided at the Burgh Court without any re-election, so his resignation cannot have been taken seriously. In 1657 Cromwell, against the advice of Monk, suspended the municipal elections, and it was not till 24th February, 1658, that the ban was removed by the Council of State. The election was held in April, 1658.²

When the Town Council was allowed to function they took their duties seriously. "They unanimously condescendit in ane voyce that the counsellours sall frequently meitt in the Tolbuith everie counsell day for

1. Consultations of the Ministers of Edinburgh (Scottish History Society), II., p. xiv.

2. See Glasgow Records, 1630-62, p. 391.

agitating the townes affairs and bissiness and what counsellour sall absent himself fra the said meitting being lawfully warneist sall pay Xii s." (3/10/1659). As this penalty proved inadequate the Council later "ordained that att every meiting hereinafter they be advertised to meit the day before and every counsellor that will not meit is to pay fourty shillings of wnlaw unlesse they come to any of the Magistrates and give ane reasonable excuse why they are not to meit that day." And they tried to encourage trade. They admitted John Davidson "Marchant in the Iyles" to be a Burgess—he having promised to make his residence here and they further freed him of "all stent, taxationnis, watergangis, warding and public dewes" for the space of five years and they granted him liberty to build a warehouse in any convenient place belonging to the community within the Burgh he always making the same available not only for his own use but also for the use of any who would join him in trade; conform to their respective stocks, and pay their proportion of the building. This liberty was to continue during his residence here, but the building was to revert to the town on his removal, he being paid the value thereof. (23/6/1670). Davidson was a merchant—We shall see how the Council dealt with a craftsman, for there was in olden times a marked difference between the two classes.

An Act passed in 1636 provided that no one should be a member of the Town Council except merchants and craftsmen, dwellers in the Burgh, and fines were often imposed by the Convention of Burghs or the Privy Council for electing any one but a merchant as Provost or Bailie. The merchant was, of course, the shopkeeper—the man who sold. He could only sell if he was a Burgess. Thus John M'Donald in Dountuillan appeared before the Magistrates charged with selling to Donald M'Gilchrist a Bailie, but then dwelling in Glasgow,

plaiding and other commodities for his father-in-law Matthew Aitken, Burgess of Glasgow. Both buyer and seller were convicted for dealing with "outin townesmen" and fined £40 Scots. (11/7/1655).

The Craftsman was the artificer—the mechanic. The Craftsmen bought material for manufacture, but only for their own trade. Originally a craftsman made to order only—he did not manufacture for the market. A surgeon was a craftsman, and the fact that the object of his care was the body of man only gave him a greater dignity amongst his fellow craftsmen.² The Merchants might have their Guild—with the Dean at the head of it—but there was no Guild in Rothesay. As the population of the Burghs grew, the craftsmen increased, and they began to combine and to have deacons. Such combinations were looked upon as a means of getting wages up, and were accordingly frowned on by the merchants. A long struggle ensued. As designations are not given in our Council Minutes, we cannot say whether craftsmen were admitted to the Council or not—but although Archibald Wallace was a surgeon and consulted by town's people and kirk session, the highest municipal dignity he attained was Collector of Cess at a salary of £8 Scots. Two entries in the Minutes show that the movement for combination of craftsmen reached Rothesay. It is minuted—12th December, 1682—that a summons had been called at the instance of the trades of the Burgh to have a Deaconry. The Council resolved to defend. On 29th September, 1683, the Council voted to Mr Robert Stewart, Advocate, as his fee for compearing for the Burgh—Five Dollars.³ No further notice appears regarding this action, but Blain says that it was unsuccessful.

1. Early Burgh Organisation, I., p. 343.

2. Early Burgh Organisation, I., p. 471.

3. One Dollar=58/- Scots, 5 Dollars=£1 4s 2d Stg.

The Common Good, or common purse, out of which payments were made, was inconsiderable—in the language of the minutes—modernised, considering that their Common Good is small and the Burgh is under burden of debt for certain bygone years of their Exchequer dues, and of the missive dues (to the Convention of Burghs) and has Commissioners now to send to Parliament and the Convention of Burghs, and has schools and a smiddie to build, and several other common affairs belonging to the Burgh which the Common Good for the present being small cannot undertake unless the common purse be further augmented, the Council finding the wrack and ware to be a common good and might be helpful to their common purse if the same and the common moss within the Burgh were roused and the proceeds taken into the common purse, and so, in spite of a protest, they were sold by auction, the wrack and seaware at 50 merks (£33 6s 8d) and the common moss at 20 merks (£13 6s 8d) in all 70 merks or equal to £56 13s 4d Scots. (17/10/1660). And some times the Council were able to get the necessary work done for payments in kind, as when John Millar, Mason in Arran, was admitted a Burgess on his undertaking to build “6 ells of casay in breadth and length within the Burgh where pointed out.” (23/6/1670)

A smith and smithy were necessary for the town, but it was apparently difficult to get a smith to settle here. In June, 1656, the Council resolved to build a smithy. The work was undertaken by Colin Fergie at an inclusive wage of 13/4 per day, with the assistance of John Dow M'Neill at 10/- per day, the owners of horses in the town to cart the necessary materials according to the number of horses each had. John Thomson was appointed smith. The charges for smith work were—for working iron, 12d per lb.; for shoeing horses, 20d for the “gang” of horse shoes¹—the towns-

1. Gang=set of four,

men furnishing shoes and nails—the smith to provide coal but the townsmen to lead the coals to the smithy free. The town supplied two fore hammers and one hand hammer. But Thomson did not remain long in the Burgh, for in two years they appointed James Logan from Lochgilphead to be the Town Smith. He undertook to remain for two years, and for a third year unless he could give a relevant reason that he could not any longer continue. As a further inducement, he was to get twelve pounds per annum for his house rent, a new smithy, and freedom from all taxation except excise. But the patronage extended to the smith was meagre, as none remained any length of time.

As now, the Town Council had to see to the keeping of order in the town, and the Magistrates had to preside at the Burgh Courts. A common piper perambulated the town at 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. in summer, and 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. in winter, and for this duty he was paid 6/- “out of ilk reik (house) and fra ilk tredsman within the town.” But the pipes were probably too strident for the town's people, for 10 years later we find that he had given way to a drummer, who only got 4/- out of every house, but had liberty to travel a month in the year abroad about his own lawful affairs.

The Tolbooth was the centre of the civic life. It stood at the corner of High Street and Castle Street, on part of the site now occupied by the County and Burgh buildings. Nearly opposite stood the Market Cross. In the Tolbooth the Council met, justice was dispensed by Bailies, Sheriff and Justiciar. It also served as a prison. But in olden times a man was not sent to prison as now. He was ordered to ward himself, that is, to enter prison and wait till he got security to pay his fine. If he failed to ward himself he was liable to have his burgage freedom forfeited. The criminal cases are much as we find in a Police Court to-day, as assault and calling a woman a witch, and that

she was the cause of the death of several people. Duncan M'Allister set upon John Muir to take his life with a dirk and was fined 500 merks Scots and to find caution for his good behaviour. Adam Kelburn gave Angus M'Ilhay a "cuff" for calling him a knave. He was fined £10, and Angus was fined £5 for calling Adam a knave. The Town Court had also many applications for letters of Lawburrows¹ against prominent men. For example, Major David Ramsay, the Commissary, became bound not to harm ex-Bailie M'Neill, and the ex-Bailie not to harm the Major, each under a penalty of £600. One prisoner, however, gave the Magistrates some trouble. The Laird of Loup (in Knapdale) was confined on 26th July, 1669, in the Tolbooth for some reason unspecified. Now, it was the duty of the Burgesses to watch the Tolbooth when a prisoner was detained there. But on this occasion "several burgesses, although warned, did absent themselves from defending the Magistrates, who, to the hasard of their lives, were set upon by a great number of Highlanders with their swords drawn under cloud of night." If any burgess could prove that he knew nothing of this great tumult and uproar or of the "hasard" of the Magistrates, he would be acquitted, although otherwise he would be liable to be fined £100. But Alexander Robinson, their officer, having proved himself to be "faultie and knavis" in his office, was to remove himself from the Burgh within 24 hours, and never more to return. It is, however, doubtful if he left Rothesay, for in the following year we find him carrying on his duty as officer. And for 23 years he was to "continue to act as officer, and to keep the clock in order, and to have for his pains £12 Scots of Money, a pair of double shoes, four pound of candles and a pig of oil." For this he had to ring the bell of the Tolbooth daily at 6 a.m., between

1. Lawburrows—a form of process by which any one who has, or thinks he has, reason to apprehend danger from another, obliges the other to find caution not to trouble or molest him,

Michaelmas and Patrickmas and from Patrickmas till Michaelmas at 5 a.m., and throughout the year at 8 p.m., and that under the penalty of 40/- for each failure.

The Bailies also exercised a civil jurisdiction in the Burgh Court, and although the Burgh Civil Court has not been actually abolished, the Sheriff Court has taken over all the duties of the old Burgh Court. The most numerous cases were services of heirs, but there were also several cases similar to what we find in the Sheriff Small Debt Court to-day. Alister Glas sued Archd. Bannatyne of Lubas for 19 Merks of fee with a "sark," he being at the herring fishing. The debt was admitted, and decree given for the 19 Merks with 2 Merks for the "sark," with 16/- of expenses. Robert Beith sued Peter Gray for 28 Merks with a night's meat to himself and his family as use is in like case, together with a curchief for his wife and that for house rent. Decree for 28 Merks and 13/4 for night's meat and 10/- for the curcheff with 20/- of expenses.

I have mentioned Major Ramsay as a somewhat quarrelsome man, although he held an influential position. He may have been the storm centre in another affair. On 26th May, 1664, a petition was presented to the Convention of Royal Burghs by the Magistrates complaining that the Sheriff of Bute had relieved prisoners without the orders of the Magistrates, had beaten the Magistrates, and committed other incivilities. The Magistrates asked the assistance of the Convention in securing redress before the Privy Council, which request was agreed to. An agreement was, however, come to between the Sheriff (Sir Dougald Stewart) and Donald M'Gilchrist to the effect that neither of them would "prejudge ane anetheris priviledges" and that any controversy which might thereafter arise should be settled by two reasonable men, one from each side. A minute of 6th September, 1664, records that the whole

Council being convened and taking into consideration the bad consequences of any diversion between the Sheriff of Bute and the Burgh, and finding that Major David Ramsay has had a hand in keeping up jealousies between the Sheriff and the Burgh, the Magistrates and Council "doe testifie their dislyk and detest of any sutche persone or practice" and so resolved that he should be incapable of being a Councillor of the Burgh in all time coming. Major Ramsay was Commissary of the Isles. He was elected a Burgess in 1660, and as we shall see he ultimately became Provost, but not by the choice of the Town Councillors.

It was one of the duties of the Town Council to maintain the Harbour. The Balskyte Burn flowed down our present Castle Street and Watergate, and the Harbour was at the mouth of the Burn. In 1665 it was not in anything like a good condition "Considering that the water of the Burgh (through occasion of extraordinary spate thereof is out of order) so that the same is prejudicial to the Harbour for keeping the boats and barks that shall repair therein skaithless," the Council divided the town into four quarters to get the inhabitants to do the necessary repairs. Any person absenting was to be fined 20/-, the money to be employed for the work. Each boat and each plough to furnish one creel 2 ell long, three-quarter wide, and 6 feet high, under a penalty of 20/-. Each two skouts (small boats) to furnish a creel. But the repair does not seem to have been very effectual, for four years later the Harbour again required repair. Each boat owner was required to bring a load of stones. In the following year the Council again decreed that boatowners should bring a load of stones—those who neglected to do so last year to bring two loads. Two years later, in 1672, boatowners were again ordained to bring stones for the repair of the harbour or pay a "leg dollar" (i.e., a silver dutch coin worth 56/- Scots) for each boatful "and

meantime ordains the boats to be arrested until they do a duty under pain of £10 each boat that is deficient." In 1677 the Council appointed Quartermasters to see to the repairing of the Quay, to cause the inhabitants to win stones and put the same on the ground and build up the broken slaps and set up the loose stones, under a penalty of 45/-. In 1679 the Council again appointed Quartermasters "for building up the Quay." Then comes a blank of $4\frac{1}{2}$ years in the Minute Books, but when the Minutes are resumed in 1684 we again find the Council appointing Quartermasters to secure that breaches in the Quay were repaired.

The Parish of Rothesay embraced not only the Burgh but also the whole of the present North Bute Parish, and was accordingly a Burghal landward one. The Town Council as representatives of the community were Heritors, and as such interested in the Church and Manse, in so far as the provision and upkeep of the buildings were concerned. The Manse was situated in High Street, immediately to the north of the Old Church Yard. When the Rev. John Stewart was inducted on 30th June, 1658, the Presbytery found that the Manse was "insufficient and wast and that the Parishioners have undertaken to buy or build for better accommodation for their minister and his successors a mansion house some other where." As a suitable site was somewhat difficult to obtain, the minister found lodgings in a house belonging to Mr Robert Stewart, the Schoolmaster. But the minister was "to have the privilege of pasturing his 'ky' on the best common pasture in the Burgh, and was at liberty to cast his peats in any moss—the parishioners freely leading them to the Manse." Sixty-two years before this several detached pieces of ground had been designed for a Glebe, but when Mr Stewart applied to the occupants of some of these pieces for rent he was met with a refusal on the ground that they were not tenants but owners of the

ground. An action in the Burgh Court brought these parties to their senses and they were ordained to pay the usual rents, which were payable partly in kind and partly in money. Thus one party's rent was 3 firlets victual and a pint of "aqua vita" with four fowls and 8/-. The Court gave decree for the victual, fowls and money, but omitted all reference to the "aqua vita."

The heritors were not long in securing a more suitable house for the minister, for on 3rd March, 1659, the Session appointed four of their number to "sight the house quhilk is bought for the minister and to give in ther report against the next Session quhat the re-paireing thereof will cost." The house was too small and the heritors had to acquire a piece of ground to carry out the enlargement of the house. The Burgh's share of the cost was £100 Scots, being one-fourth of the total cost. To collect their proportion the Council ordained four of the "best known and qualified men who do best know the condition of the inhabitants" to apportion the said sum amongst the indwellers and inhabitants to be laid on "all masters, man servants, maid servants, and other inhabitants come to years of discretion." The new manse was in High Street. It is still inhabited, forming part of the building known as "Campbell's Land." It is interesting to note that this house was, at the time of its purchase, said to be situated at the "Towne Heid." Even in Dr. Maclea's time, beyond Minister's Brae was "beyond the body of the town."¹ Some 21 years later another well known landmark was being built in High Street. On 22nd April, 1680, George Cunningham was "given liberty of so much ground in the fore street of his house as will build a turnpike stair, he leaving room for a sink to let the water run along the street."

The Church was a small building, 81 feet by 22 feet. The town was responsible for the upkeep of one-fourth

¹, Bute in the Olden Time, II., p. 299.

of the building, including the roof, being the part nearest the choir, and they claimed accommodation for the inhabitants of the town in this part of the Church. In 1659 some of the leading heritors asked permission to erect seats in the Church, and a Committee was appointed to regulate the seating. The seats were for heritors in the Parish only, and a Kingarth proprietor had to remove a "dask" as he was not entitled to have a fixed seat in the Church. The Town Council were permitted to build a common loft at a cost of £50. The part of the Church designed for the landward heritors was kept in repair by the Session. The fabric was in a dilapidated state, and the slated roof gave considerable trouble, and on 21st July, 1660, the Session agreed to the building of a "'to-fall' to the Kirk wall quhilk is lyk to fall."

As heritors, the Council were also interested in the School. The Scots Parliament and Privy Council from time to time passed measures to secure the education of the people. In particular, the Act passed in 1646 (Charles I.) provided that a school should be established in every parish by the advice of the Presbytery. A commodious house for the school was to be provided and a salary was to be modified to the Schoolmaster not under 100 merks, nor over 200 merks (£11 13s 4d—£133 6s 8d) Scots. Where the boundaries of Burghs and Parish were co-terminous the School was erected and managed by the Town Council. In Rothesay—a landward Burghal Parish—it was a Parish School.

The Parish School was in Rothesay, but the relationship of Council, Heritors and Kirk Session is somewhat obscure. In some cases the teacher was appointed by the Town Council, sometimes by the Session. On one occasion at least the Council and Session elected the same man on two successive days, but in many cases

there is no minute of appointment. At a subsequent date Lord Bute claimed the patronage of the School.

The first election of which any record exists is that of Donald M'Gilchrist. He had been Town Clerk since 1642 (or it may have been earlier), and he undertook the duties of Teacher and Session Clerk from 15th May, 1655. His salary, payable by the Council, was £40 per annum, payable half-yearly with fees—10/- per quarter for town children, and 12/- per quarter for landward children, with £30 payable by the Kirk Session, this sum being met out of penalties imposed on delinquents by the Session. But Mr M'Gilchrist occupied the post for only eighteen months. His successor, James Stewart, on his resignation in November, 1658, told the Session that they were owing him £46 7/-. By 23rd August, 1660, he had received £20. When the balance was paid is not recorded. On 3rd November, 1658, the Council appointed Mr Robert Stewart of Skarrell, son of Mr Patrick Stewart, former Parish Minister, to be Schoolmaster. He was, of course, also appointed Session Clerk. He was a considerable landowner in Rothesay. He was educated at Glasgow University, of which he was a graduate, and was assistant to his father in 1641. He was recommended to the Presbytery of Knockfergus, in Ireland, in 1645, and to the Presbytery of Cowal for testimonials in 1657, but he was apparently unsuccessful in obtaining a charge. His career as teacher was short—three years—owing to misconduct with his servant he resigned, and glad to get off so easy, as he had been afraid that “she would be drowned and he execute because he was a preacher.”

Mr James Stewart was appointed by the Council as his successor on 17th July, 1661. On 18th July, the Session having before them the names of Mr James Stewart and Mr Robert Paton, elected the former

to be Schoolmaster, thus homologating the choice of the Town Council.

Patrick Stewart, a nephew of Mr Robert Stewart, was Schoolmaster in 1665. There is no minute of his appointment, but on 10th July, in that year, the Council took into “consideratione the grevance geawin in be Patrick Stewart Schoolmaister anent the not thankfull payment to him of his colledge fies and anent the not thankfull payment to him of five schilling Scots money yierlie furth of everie merkland within the Isle of Bute.” As the Council had guaranteed the fees they ordered the Town Officer to warn the parties in default, and as regards the payment of the 5/-, they resolved to pay the Town Officer £6 yearly to be paid by the Schoolmaster, and £6 to be collected from the defaulters after a month's notice. On these terms Patrick agreed to act as teacher for another year. These measures seemed to have the desired effect, as Patrick was Schoolmaster for many years, with intervals.

There is a hiatus in the Kirk Session Records from 1661 to 1680—that is at the beginning of the reign of Charles II., when Episcopacy was the form of Church Government. On 18th December, 1680, there is a Minute of Heritors and Session stating that the office of Schoolmaster was vacant, and recording the appointment of Mr Duncan Martine at the same salary as Patrick Stewart and his predecessors, but with increased baptism and marriage dues. The details of the salary are:—“For every baptism, 8/-; and for every marriage, 16/-; 5/- out of each merkland: Fees, 10/- quarterly for each town child who learn Scots or Latin, and 12/- for each landward child or stranger.” In addition, he was to get the reader's dues according as the Bishop appoints, and he was also appointed Session Clerk and Treasurer of the dues “whereby he may supply the £30 payable to himself in the first place to his own use and account for the rest.” This Minute is the only

one during the incumbency of Bishop Graham, and is signed by him. But two years were enough for Martine, and for the rest of the period under review Patrick Stewart was Schoolmaster.

The Town Council seems to have provided the Schoolhouse, but the accommodation was of a very meagre description. On 10th November, 1658, the Council agreed with Patrick M'Neill for the back chamber of his new house for a Schoolhouse. On 29th April, 1662, the Council "Appoints the rowme for biging a skullhouse to be biggit at the house end belongit to umquhile Andrew Galy," and remitted to the Magistrates and any two they may advise to make up a roll of the inhabitants to defray the expense of 1000 stones and the cost of their carriage to the school. It is doubtful what, if anything, was done, for six years later "considering that the town had been without a Schoolhouse for many years," the Council appointed a voluntary contribution from the inhabitants and to report their diligence within a fortnight." But like voluntary assessments in general the appeal does not seem to have been successful, for two years later we find the Council recommending the Bailies to try to get a chamber for the Schoolmaster. It was not till 1676 that the Council resolved to build a Schoolhouse, 20 feet long by 17 broad, in Castle Street, and it was completed in 1680.¹ About this time a sum of £12 Scots was voted to the Schoolmaster for house rent.

The Kirk Session attended to the wants of the poor, the Kirk door collection being dedicated to the use of the poor. But the Town Council also on occasion gave charitable donations. Thus, considering the great loss sustained by Archibald Glass, Merchant, one of their burgesses, who was wounded about the town's interest and being willing to help the recovery of his

1. For particulars see Transactions of this Society, Vol. IV., p. 49.

loss, ordained that he should have the use of the west booth under the Tolbooth for the space of six years from Whitsunday, 1664, without payment of any rent. On 28th February, 1672, Mr Archibald Beith, late minister of Kilbride in Arran, "declaring that throw the exigence of ane affair of his which he haid to do at Edinburgh be lawe he was reduced to poverty," asked for assistance from the common purse of the town and for liberty to solicit further assistance from the inhabitants. The Town Council gave him £20, but refused his further request. Archibald Beith was a Burgess of Rothesay. On the establishment of Episcopacy in 1662 he was appointed Minister of Kilbride. Soon after his settlement there, in defiance of a royal proclamation forbidding the importation of meal from Ireland, a boat with meal arrived in Lamash Bay. In virtue of the said Proclamation Mr Beith and several armed companions seized the boat. The crew, however, succeeded in recovering the boat and tried to make their escape. They were pursued and overtaken by Mr Beith and his companions, and on their refusing to surrender were fired upon—a member of the crew, a merchant from Irvine, being killed. Beith was apprehended and tried for murder; found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. The sentence was, however, remitted and he was set at liberty. He was on his way back to Arran when he made the above request.¹

And so the Town Council and Kirk Session pursued the even tenor of their way undisturbed by the exciting events which were taking place on the mainland. No rejoicings on the occasion of the Restoration are recorded. There was no "killing time" in Rothesay. The changes from Presbytery to Episcopacy and from Episcopacy to Presbytery were made without any disturbance of parson or people. The first Episcopacy was established in 1610 and abolished in 1638. The

1. The Church in Arran. Prof. J. Kennedy Cameron.

second Episcopacy was established in 1661 and abolished in 1689. During these periods five ministers served the Parish—Robert Stewart for 15 years was Presbyterian, and 4 Episcopalian; Patrick Stewart 15 years Episcopalian and 19 years Presbyterian; John Stewart 3 years Presbyterian and 5 Episcopalian. Bishop Graham was for 22 years Parish Minister, all under Episcopacy, as also was Andrew Fraser during his two year's incumbency. Only Fraser was deprived of his benefice, and that for not praying for William and Mary. It has, of course, to be kept in mind that the Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions were never abolished, and at least during the reign of Charles II. it was practically impossible to distinguish between the worship of the Episcopal and Presbyterian Church. If the ministers sided with the ruling party, so did the Town Council. Predominantly Covenanters in 1638, in 1665 they declared that "thesse oathes quherof the on was commonly called the nationall covenant and it was suorne and explained in the yeire 1638 thereafter and the other intituled a solemne leauge and covenant wer and ar in themselves unlauffull oathes and wer taken and imposed upon the subjects of this Kingdome against the fundamentall lawes and liberties of this same and ther lyeth noe obligatione on them nor any of the subjects from the saids oathes or either of them to endevore any cheing or alternatione of the government either in church or state as it is now established by the laues of the Kingdome."

Charles II. died on 6th February, 1685, and troubles began. On 25th April the Privy Council, in preparation for Argyll's invasion, ordered six score of men to be sent to the western shires, to meet at Maybole, and the Burgh had to send its proportion. The Council in addition to imposing 1½ months cess, ordained all persons between 60 and 16 to muster at the Calfward and to bring with them all guns, swords, and other arms.

Argyll's invasion was a failure. Instead of attacking Inveraray, where Atholl, Lord Lieutenant of Argyll, had his headquarters, he sailed for Bute, where he spent 12 days, and when leaving plundered the town and demolished the doors and windows of the Castle, the Earl's brother burning it soon after.¹ On 16th June, 1685, the Parish Minister informed the Session that "When Argyll and the rebels were here in the countrey that Argyll's ministers and some others of the rebels lodging themselves violently at his house, among many other ignomies done by them to him they sacriligiously broke up the poors box and took away all the charities." The poor man was forced to leave the Island on 30th May, and did not return till 12th June, when the rebels had left.

Then on 9th June, 1687, an Act of the Privy Council was produced whereby Major Ramsay was nominated as Provost. This was a curious proceeding, as Sir James Stewart, the Sheriff, was a Royalist, and Ramsay, as we have seen, was his bitter enemy. Although Ramsay showed his loyalty by lighting a bonfire on the occasion of His Majesty's birthday² (at a cost of £13 13s 10d), he only held office from June till December, 1687, when he was superseded by an Act of the Privy Council dated at Windsor, 15th August, but which only reached Rothesay on 12th December, 1687.

Ramsay was not finished with the Sheriff. He had declined to pay the Castle Dues of "ane creall of peitts and ane hen yearly furth of ilk reiking house in the Burgh and ane gallon of ale furth of ilk brewing house within the Burgh that brews ale at St. Brixday." The Sheriff raised an action in the Burgh Court and obtained a decree in 1687 for 5 years arrears. David Ramsay, Donald M'Gilchrist, the Commissary Clerk (son of the former Town Clerk), and John

¹ Rothesay Castle (by John Mackinlay), p. 14, footnote.

² 14th October, 1687.

Stewart of Ascog, "most presumptuously, in their own name and in name of the whole inhabitants, raised a suspension and reduction of this decree, as appears out of factiousness and malice, as they had frequently done before to involve the Council in groundless debates and pleas to stir up the inhabitants against the said Sir James, and to quarrel his old and just rights." As the whole inhabitants, except some few inconsiderable persons, were against the action of suspension and reduction, so the Town Council "disowned, declined and renounced the said suspension and reduction." A proof was led before Bailie Ninian Stewart, at which several witnesses testified that they had paid such dues for many years—one being a man 101 years old. The Sheriff got decrees against all defaulters.

Except for these quarrels, the Major proved himself to be an energetic Provost during the very short time he held office. In 1673 a new clock had been obtained for the Tolbooth at a cost of £100 Scots. But Ramsay considered that a steeple was necessary for carrying the new bell, costing £159 14s, and the clock, and on 16th September, 1687, he got the Council to approve of this. His Provostship was too short to allow him to have the work carried out. On 17th March, 1688, the new Council agreed with Matthew Moore to build the steeple at their own price—so they agreed meantime to give him 40 merks, and having sold the old bell for £12 they gave him this money to account.¹

In September, 1688, an invasion by the Prince of Orange became certain. On 14th November, an order by the Privy Council was produced empowering Sir James Stewart to gather together a force for defence of the Shire of Bute. The Council therefore granted warrant to Sir James to command heritors and others, whether burghal or landward, to obey his commands,

1. For particulars see Transactions of this Society, Vol. IV., p. 52.

and they imposed one months cess and, as the "present exigence will require constant attendance and counsell," they appointed a Committee with full power to meet with Sir James and lay on such necessary burdens and impositions as they should think fit.

On 20th November the Council arranged for a guard of 20 men to be on duty each night. But William of Orange had landed in England on 5th November. James II. abdicated and fled to France on 12th December, and a defence force was not required. Six months later the Committee of Estates ordered Sir James to be detained as a prisoner in the Tolbooth at Edinburgh.

On 7th March, 1689, 115 Burgesses met in conformity with a letter from the Prince of Orange to elect a commissioner to the Convention of Estates, and elected Mr Robert Stewart, uncle of the Sheriff of Bute, to be their representative. But he refused to sign the Act declaring the Convention to be a free and lawful meeting of the Estates.¹ Six months later the Burgesses met and elected a Council. The days of interference by the Crown in Municipal or Church affairs were over.

1. See Transactions of this Society. Vol. IX., p. 41.