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—dated 1620—is that commemorating William Copland of Colliston, and two of the family were prominent Provosts of Dumfries, one playing a leading part in the building of the Midsteepie, the Caul, and the town mills. He also appears to have built the house in Queensberry Street, now a grocer's shop, through from Union Street, and bearing his coat of arms, with that of the Cunninghams, on the wall. It was he who acquired Blackwood from Sir John A. Anstruther of Newark in 1704, and he disposed it to his second son, Thomas. It passed on in the family until the last survivor of the family, Miss Copland, of Colliston, now of Newabbey, sold it recently.

The present house was built between 1750 and 1780, and has had various additions since. The walls at the back are six to seven feet thick, not for defensive purposes, but because they once were destroyed by fire while being built.

The grounds of the house were next viewed, and before departing the party awarded Mr Thomas a hearty vote of thanks on the call of Mr Reid for his kindness.

Hightownhead Fort.

Over Auldgirth Bridge, which Carlyle's father helped to build, the party passed to the old British fort situated about 200 yards south-east of Hightownhead Farm, near Dalswinton. The fort is an oval of stones, 163 feet by 109 feet. On the south side there have been three walls, the middle one being best preserved. Inside the oval are smaller circles of stones, one of 20 and two others of 15 feet diameter, suggestive of hut circles. The fort was approached by a passage still clearly evident through the wood.

From the Fort to Dalswinton House was not a long journey, and there the party were invited to tea by Mr and Mrs Landale. After tea, the company gathered on the lawn, and Mr A. Cameron Smith read the following paper on

The Estate of Dalswinton.

By A. Cameron Smith.

[In transmitting his MSS. to the Secretary, he expresses an earnest hope that any whose eyes this paper may reach, and who may possess or know of family or other papers bear-

ing upon the history of Kirkmahoe, will communicate with him at his address.]

The present mansion has nothing to suggest antiquity, having been originally built by Patrick Miller, shortly after he entered into possession in 1785. The castle upon the same site was probably in existence in 1250, the year in which John Comyn gave the Monks of Melrose a new passage to their lands and grange across the Nith at Friars' Carse. Who possessed the barony before John Comyn is unknown, but a survey of the position from a military point of view gives ground for believing that, in any age, the site was an ideal one, and especially so in times when natural strength was of the first importance. On the S.-W. the Nith was a fairly secure barrier against the wild Galloway Celts, and one of its branches might flow along the base. On the S. and E. the water was continued in the marsh which Patrick Miller converted into a loch, and though undefended on the N.-W. in the immediate vicinity, the range of hills and the narrow pass at Auldgirth secured to the Castle an area of rich land sufficient to maintain a garrison. Perhaps the oldest habitation would be a lake-dwelling upon the marsh, and certainly when the loch was cleared out some 70 years ago quantities of oak and grains of wheat and barley were found at the bottom.

The enclosure between the castle and the Auldgirth pass has been the scene of three military incursions. In the first Wallace, chasing the English from Sanquhar Castle, overtook them near Comyn's castle of Dalswinton, and routed them in Dalswinton Forest. In the second, Edward III. of England, with his invading host and his secretariat, camped somewhere on the slope upon which the castle looked, and dated from the "Forest of Dalswinton, 11th July, 1335," the grant of an honour conferred upon that Wm. de Montague, who, two years later, was created 1st Earl of Salisbury. Edward was perhaps not altogether satisfied with the performance of his custodian, David de Strathbogle, Earl of Athole. Seven weeks later, however, he gave explanations which were accepted by his English sovereign, and three months later

he was killed in the north by his enemies of the national party. The castle was immediately thereafter committed to Sir John de Moubray. Unfortunately no plan or picture of the castle has been preserved, but the ruins stood till the present mansion took their place. The high standing of its possessors indicates a place of considerable importance. It was compared in one report with the castle of Roxburgh. Another report made for the English warden between 1563 and 1566 mentions "the Ould Castle of Dawswynton, vi miles above Dumfries uponn theast syde of the watter of Nytht. It haitht been in oulde tymes a notable strength, pertyning to the Comyng, whoo of a nobleman of Scotland was so trew Yngles. But the ground ys subgett to mynding (capable of being mined), and far up in the cuntre. Loughare Brige is four miles from Dumfries. Above the same is a straite (narrow) ground for fortification, and is the second passaige in Nythisdale furtht of England to Dumfries." This appears to indicate some continuity in the castle's existence from Comyn till it was superseded as a dwelling place by another, which may be distinguished as the old House of Dalswinton, and was built early in the 17th century, in conformity with more peaceful prospects, on the level ground, and of which only the stair turret remains.

Of the third military incident, a more satisfactory description is furnished by the records. It belongs to the time of the rough wooing of the infant Queen of Scots, fostered by the English party, who, however, spoke of the project as the "godly marriage." Lennox and Wharton, assisters of the godly marriage, with many assured Scots, including Maxwell of Caerlaverock, set out from Dumfries in the early morning of 23rd February, 1548, and brought their footmen to a point 8 miles from Dumfries. They are, of course, English miles, and the spot should be near Brandyburn Brae, where there is a hollow near the river with the suggestive name of the Deadman's Hole. In advance of these, 1200 light horse passed on under young Henry Wharton and burned Durisdeer, and when dangerously isolated from the infantry they were suddenly attacked by Maxwell

and some of the "assured Scots." "Upon the field near Dusdere," says the record, though the pass of Auldgirth fits the description exactly, "hoising a black pensill" (pennant), these turncoat Scots "thrust in between the English horse and foot, enemies appeared on all the surrounding hills, and compelled our horse" (writes Wharton) "to take to the mountains and find some other passage to rejoin us." The only road which suggests itself is the "lime" road across Gawain Moor and down the Pennyland road. "And did rejoin the foot who stood firm though the enemy came within 1000 yards of them. For, making towards the place where the Earl of Lennox and Lord Wharton were coming forward with the footmen near to the old castell of Dauswinton, sometime the house of the Cumins, they bruited it abroad that the English horsemen were quite overthrown."

Joined by the cavalry, the English made short work of the Scots, caught in the rear perhaps, drove them into the Nith, and above 500 were slain and drowned. Another account says, "400 killed, besides sundrie drowned." There is a reported graveyard between the stables and the present village which may give some clue to the place of the conflict.

I shall now retrace my steps and endeavour to give a summary of the various families who possessed Dalswinton. As I have said, the records do not explain how the Comyns came into possession. Tradition says that the early owners were the Thanes of Galloway, who would be Alan, Lord of Galloway, or Thomas, his brother, Earl of Athole, both sons of Roland, son of Uchtred, son of Fergus, Lord of Galloway. Riddell of Glenriddell thought Devorguilla owned it. She was a daughter of Alan. On the other hand, the oldest or one of the oldest charters belonging to Dumfriesshire gives to Bruce in 1124 Annandale "up to the march of Dunegal de Stranid." Now earliest Dalswinton seems to have extended to the natural boundaries, the watershed and Lochar Moss. We know the date when Carnsalloch and Dursquhen were wadset off it to dower a daughter of Dalswinton to a Maxwell of Caerlaverock in the end of the 14th century. Also when Dalswinton was given by Bruce to the Stewarts and

Duncow to the Boyds it is quite clear that the latter, Duncow and Clerklands, had till then been part of Dalswinton, a fourth part in fact, "service to be done perteyning to a fourth part of Dalswinton." Dalswinton therefore included all the land west of Lochar Moss, between Dumfries and Auldgirth, and between the Nith and the watershed. One would suppose that Kirkmichael was part of Annandale, and the only march between Annandale and Stranid, which could have required definition, must have been the Amisfield gap. Dunegal's family owned Closeburn and Upper Nithsdale, but only Dalswinton marched with Annandale. Though the conclusion that Dunegal was Lord of Dalswinton seems strongly suggested, it does not exclude a possibility of later possession by the Lords of Galloway, and there are presumptions in favour of this which need not be discussed in this short paper.

When Bruce felt himself securely settled in his kingdom he gave Comyn's lands, three-fourths of them at least, to the Stewarts, who were long known as of Garlies and Dalswinton, and held the barony until they became Earls of Galloway. They were descended from the 2nd son of Walter the 4th High Stewart, as the royal house traced from the eldest son. Walter, the first of Dalswinton, also received Garlies from his nephew, John Randolph, Earl of Moray, who fell at Neville's Cross. There also were taken Sir John of Dalswinton and Sir Thomas Boyd, partners in misfortune as well as neighbours in peace. The next John of Dalswinton and Carnsalloch was Warden of the Marches.

Shortly after Neville's Cross Scottish nationality slowly recovered, and Dalswinton was captured by the Scots for the third time. This exploit is attributed in Wyntown's Chronicle to Hoge (Roger) of Kirkpatrick—

Hoge of Kirkpatryck Nyddysdale,
Held at ye Scottis fay all hale,
Fra ye Castell of Dalswintoun
Wes taken, and syne dwyn down,
Syne Karlaverok tane had he.

If Dalswinton was "done down," I have already given reasons for thinking that it rose wholly or partially from its ruins.

Passing now to the end of the Stewart dynasty in Dalswinton we find that half of the barony was disposed in 1624 to one John Rome (pronounced Room in Shakespeare's time and in the records spelt accordingly), and this part of the barony has always been distinguished to recent times as Dalswinton Rome. Rome was a merchant burgess of Dumfries, and "Drave an Advantageous Trade of Droving." Serious financial difficulties arose out of a settlement he made for the children of his second marriage with Elizabeth Maxwell, who was a sister of John Maxwell, variously known as of Tinwald, of Templand, of Shaws (Closeburn), and of Friars' Carse. The stone built in at the foot of the avenue bears their initials—I. R.—E. M.—and the date—1626. It was expected that this would prove to be a marriage stone, but I have just come upon the date of the marriage contract, dated, Dumfries, 30th September, 1622, so four years earlier, and two years before he came into final possession of Dalswinton Rome. His charter is dated 3rd November, 1624, and we may now conjecture that the date 1626 was set upon a new house, that which stood till a hundred years ago. The last occupant must have been Janet Miller, the beautiful Countess of Mar, five days a Countess, though in the only notice of her death which I have been able to find she is described as the Lady of the Right Hon. Lord Erskine. She died at Dalswinton on August 25th, 1825, just ninety-seven years ago. The meadow where she pastured her cows is still known as the Lady's meadow.

Rome appears to have made much the same mistake as Patrick Miller, settled sums upon younger children in excess of what the estate could carry. Rome died in 1637 and left a legal problem which outlasted some half-dozen proprietors and provided a plentiful crop of litigation till 1703, that is for sixty-six years. Hurrying over individuals who held brief possession of the titles we come to John Maxwell of Dalswinton, advocate, a shady character, of mysterious origin, who knew the inside of the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. He and Sir John Dalzell of Glenae were married to sisters, Jonet and Agnes, daughters of James Nisbet of Restalrig. From all

his associations it may be suspected that he was a Royalist. In the disposition of Dalswinton, which he took to himself, he stipulated that the daughter who should succeed should be bound to marry one of the name of Maxwell. His eldest daughter Marion complied with this condition by marrying Hugh Maxwell, writer in Edinburgh, a young son of George Maxwell, 6th of Auldhouse (East Kilbride), Minister of Mearns. Hugh was a dour Presbyterian, who transmitted to his son George an intense dislike for the professors of the old religion. Hugh seems to have been a strenuous, religious, and litigious character, persecuted with imprisonment, fines, and quartering in Covenanting times, and on the other hand, taking the law upon his relations, including his own second daughter, Rachel, "because she took some wabs of plaiding out of her own kist, whereof she had the keys."

George, who followed him in 1704, commemorated his marriage on a stone which may be seen built into the wall at the Back Lodge entrance. It bears the initials—G. M.—J. C.—and the date, 1710. There also exists a bell with their names in full and the same date, 1710. Nevertheless it was in 1700 that he married Jane Campbell, daughter of Lord Neil Campbell, second son of Archibald, Marquis of Argyll. She was thus grand-daughter of the "great Marquis," who suffered in 1661. During George's time and his father's the peatmoss lying east of the Shaws burn, on Shaws and Pennyland, was the scene of conflicts of a dangerous nature between the tenants of Dalswinton and Duncow. This strife finally ended in litigation about 1743, after which the proprietor was allowed to build a march dyke in peace. This indicates roughly the date at which "enclosing" began in the parish. The boundary from Birsy's Grave to Quarrelwood was then laid down, but for long there was little love lost between Dalswinton and Duncow.

The last of the Maxwells, Major William, unfortunately took a £500 share in the ill-fated Ayr Bank, which had a branch at Dumfries. There was no limited liability then, and a more fortunate banker, Patrick Miller, came on the field with the "many-pounders of the bank," and became laird in

1785, and what was a more lasting title to remembrance became the benevolent landlord of Robert Burns in May, 1788, the term before the 14th October, on which the first steam-boat gasped and clicked upon the loch at five miles per hour. Miller, unfortunately, gave up steam for the cultivation of fiorin grass, and the tower which he erected in 1810 in honour of the Rev. Dr William Richardson of Clonfeacle parish, Ireland, is only known by the title, "Miller's Maggot," and the farmers pursue fiorin as a weed to be exterminated. It has been said that the greatest lawyers sometimes fail to draw their wills clearly. It is nothing to be surprised at that the banker should make a mess of his financial affairs. Being himself a younger son, he had always rebelled against the favour shown to eldest sons. In his endeavour to deal equally with his children he based the money burdens on a war valuation of the estate. The result was a case of multiple-poidning which lasted at least 30 years after his death in 1815, and when last called in the courts all the original litigants were dead. It must have been a by-word in the courts at the time when Scott was writing "Redgauntlet," and doubtless suggested the by-play made with the multiple-poidning case of Poor Peter Peebles.

Long before the case was ended the tenants of Dalswinton were meeting at Dalswinton village to celebrate the marriage of a handsome and gallant Lieutenant of the name of Macalpine, who had added the name of Leny, in accordance with the will of his mother's brother, Robert Leny of Glyns, Stirlingshire. The date was 1829, and the bride Miss Marion Agatha Downie, 3rd dr. of Robt. Downie, Esqr., of Appin, M.P. for Stirling Burghs at that time. This gracious lady's praises may be read in the verses of Allan Cunningham and Hannah Johnstone. The dinner was at 4 o'clock, and there were 23 toasts detailed in the report, though the reporter admits at the end that some of the toasts he did not remember clearly and others may be out of order. Some of the toasts were of a general nature, as for instance, "May the unmarried be soon married, and the married be happy," proposed by Mr Lawrie, farmer at Shaws. Allan Cunningham was not for-

gotten, proposed appropriately by Geo. Douglas M'Ghie, and the Rev. Mr Wightman, not yet Doctor, proposed the memory of "the late venerable Patrick Miller, Esq., that revered and beloved name."

At this point strictly antiquarian interest in Dalswinton might fittingly be assumed to terminate, but he could not conclude without observing that the barony had a perfect record of attachment and affection for its lairds. Mr and Mrs Landale, their host and hostess of that day, had acquired a barony which had remained intact since before 1400, and he hoped there was in store for them also a remainder of that feudal loyalty which had been the ancient, unbroken tradition of Dalswinton.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr Cameron Smith for his paper, on the call of Mr R. C. Reid.

A similar compliment was paid to Mr and Mrs Landale and family for their hospitality on the initiative of the Rev. Dr. King Hewison, who touched on the historic setting of the gathering and the memories and thoughts it inspired. When they reflected on that, he said, the party would give their very heartiest thanks to those who permitted them to come and see these places. It had given him the highest satisfaction to be present, and if the same feelings as he had were shared by the others, then Mr and Mrs Landale were receiving very great thanks indeed.

Mr Landale, in reply, said Mrs Landale and he were very glad to see the party, and would like them to see anything there was to be seen.

The old tower, the gardens, and the loch on which the first steamboat sailed were then visited.

On a height on Clonfeckle farm, overlooking Dalswinton, stands a monument in memory of Dr. Richardson of Clonfeacle, Ireland, who introduced florin grass, commonly known as *agrostis stolonifera*, to this country. At that time it was considered of great value, now it is looked on more as a weed, and is a more permanent memorial to the

doctor than the one of stone. In addition it is an eloquent tribute to the progress made in agriculture since then.

Quarrelwood was the next place of call, and here the party saw the interesting but poor remains of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, or, as it is perhaps better known, the Cameronian Kirk. Of an octagonal shape, and with particularly high doors for an old building, little of it remains, and the remnant is being used for housing pigs.

The Rev. W. M'Dowall, Kirkmahoe, gave a brief account of the causes that led to the formation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church or the Cameronians. This, he said, was one of their first churches to be built. Cameron had preached there, and in consequence the people were fined some thousands of pounds for allowing that. From Quarrelwood several other churches took their origin—Scaurbridge, Hightae, Springholm, Castle-Douglas, &c. The population of Quarrelwood at that time (1720) was between 200 and 300, and Duncow had a population of about 200. The church fell into decay, and its successor was Martyrs' Church, Dumfries. In his reminiscences, Mr M'Dowall told a story of three Covenanters who were being pursued by dragoons, and who sought refuge in a public-house in the village. The landlord took them in, sat them at a table, and brought flagons of wine, and bade them be merry. Within a few minutes the troops arrived, and seeing three apparently jovial revellers passed them by with hardly so much as a second glance.

On the call of Mr Shirley a hearty vote of thanks was given to Mr M'Dowall, and the party continued its way homeward through Kirkton Village, arriving about 9 p.m.