

The Dalgleish Gravestone

A buried flat gravestone in Dunfermline Abbey Old Graveyard, lying on the east side of the path from the Kirkgate to the north porch of the old church (number 8 on the diagram of the 2015 dig).

The stone bears a Latin inscription in the distinctive early seventeenth century low-relief lettering, most of which is in good condition. The two lines at the head of the stone, which would have stated the name of the occupant of the grave, have been obliterated by GT who owned this grave plot with his wife MC in 1700, but sufficient information survives elsewhere on the stone to identify it as the memorial of Master James Dalgleish who was the master of Dunfermline Grammar School from the late 1590s until his death in 1610.



The first phrase of the epitaph would have followed the usual formula:

HIC IACET M IACOBUS DALGLEISCHE

Here lies Master James Dalgleish

The next phrase seems to have said something like *'he is dead'*

The body of the inscription is as follows (rearranged into a continuous script):

ISTO SED VIGILAT TOTO NOMEN ET ORBE VIGET MYRI ADAS NEMPE INSTITUTIT GRAIO
LATIOQUE ORE ORBI TITULOS COMMEM ORARE SUOS

A free translation would be:

'but his name keeps watch in all the world and flourishes, for indeed he taught many to recount his fame to the world in Greek and Latin'

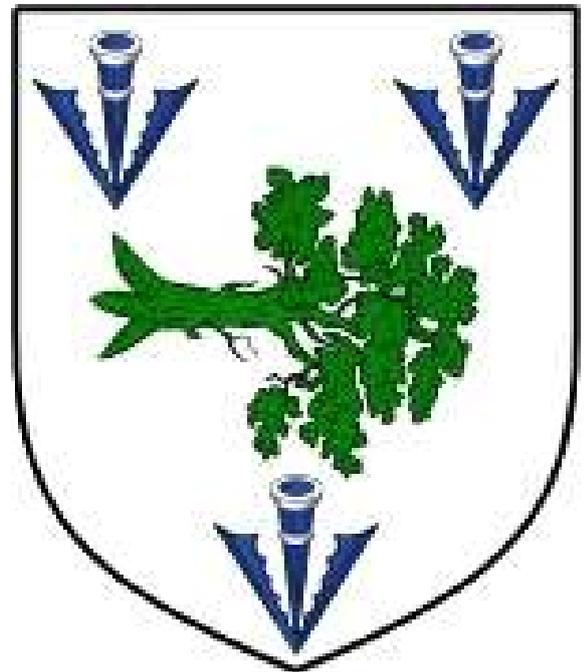
Very appropriate for a teacher at a Grammar School, where Latin and Greek were the most important subjects taught. (I am indebted to a friend who teaches Latin for help with the inscription.)

The last few lines of the inscription read:

QVI OBIIT 8 DIE NOVEMBRIS ANNO DOMINI 1(6)10 AETATIS SUA 32

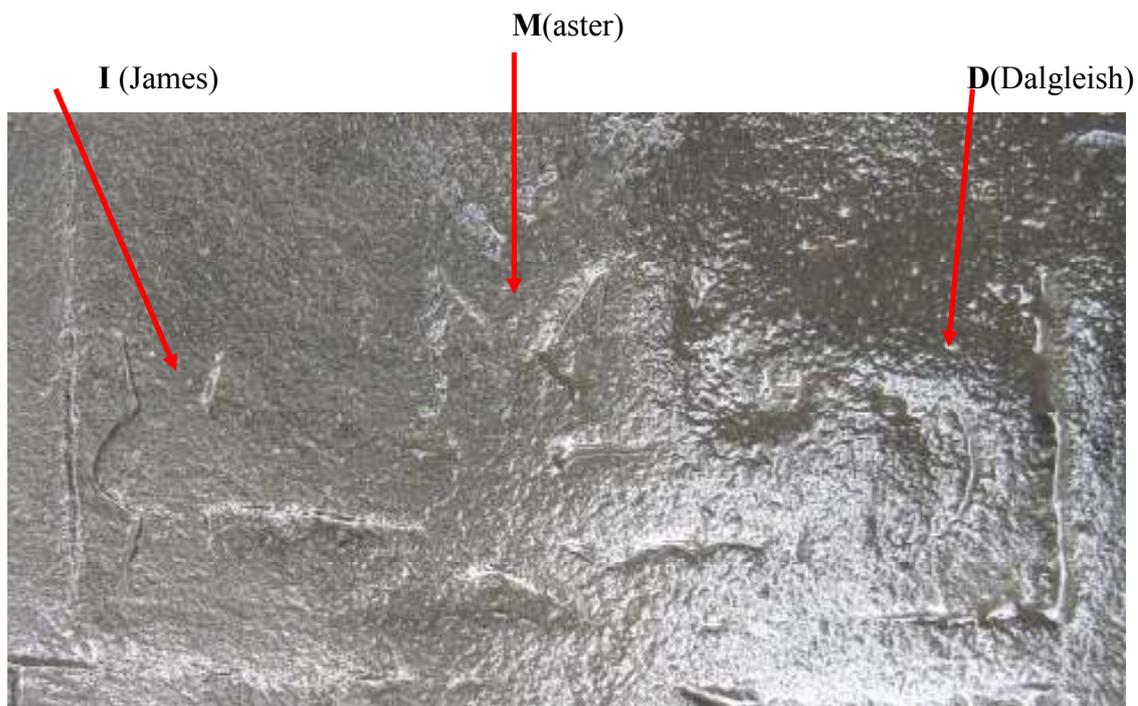
Who died (on the) 8th day of November The year of Our Lord 1610 His age 32

At the foot of the stone is a carving of the arms of the Dalglish family – a tree surrounded by three downward-pointing arrows.



The object at the centre of the shield lacks branch details but it is clearly a tree with spreading roots. It has been placed upright in order to fit better into the space available. The initials that flank the coat of arms are IM (Janet Micklejohn, wife of Mr James Dalglish) and CB. The latter was almost certainly Janet's second husband but his identity is still unknown.

Immediately above the coat of arms is a rectangular cartouche bearing three letters connected by a ribbon:





Below the coat of arms is a row of the initials of James Dalglish's children and grand-daughter

MD Margaret Dalglish (the last stroke of the M is used as the first stroke of the D)

WD William Dalglish

RD Robert Dalglish

VD Walter (Valterius) Dalglish

ED Elspeth Dalglish

CD Christian Dalglish, only child of Walter

Master James Dalglish and his Family

James was the son of Robert Dalglish, a sixteenth century Dunfermline merchant. Robert died 'beyond the seas' so he was one of the members of the Dunfermline merchant Guild who traded in Poland and Prussia. Some of them bought flax and iron in Danzig (Gdansk) for sale in Dunfermline. Much of the flax they had spun and woven and then took the linen cloth to London for sale. Some travelled as pedlars in Poland, where itinerant merchants were welcome in rural areas far distant from the country's thinly scattered towns.

Whichever career path Robert Dalglish followed he was sufficiently prosperous to buy a house at the top of Cross Wynd and to send his son to university (probably St Andrews) from which he graduated with a Master's degree that allowed him to prefix his name with the title of 'Master', usually abbreviated to 'Mr'.

James was already Master of the Grammar School in 1598, when he was a witness to the will of David Ferguson, the first Presbyterian minister in Dunfermline. On 16 February 1599 he inherited his father's house in Cross Wynd and made a conjunctfeftment (joint ownership agreement) with his future wife Janet Micklejohn. This meant that after his death she would have joint ownership of it, along with his heir, during her lifetime. James and Janet were married at Dunfermline on 18 February. The couple had five children: Margaret was born in December 1600, William in February 1602, Robert in May 1604, Elspeth in December 1606 and Walter in October 1609.

On 31 August 1600 James was a witness to the will of Thomas Alison, husband of Christian Dalglish who was probably his sister. Thomas Alison also appointed James curator (guardian) to his young daughter Catherine. On 18 December 1601 he was a witness to another will, that of Laurence Wilson a Dunfermline merchant who had done very well travelling as a pedlar in Poland and Prussia. Among other bequests Wilson left the rent of a house he owned in the High Street to be added to the annual salary of the Master of the Grammar School.

On 26 October 1609 Mr James Dalglish was made a burgess gratis as heir to his father and eleven days later he was entered to the Merchant Guild, also as heir to his father. In April 1610 he is mentioned for the last time in the Dunfermline Burgh records, standing as the cautioner that the winner of the annual horse race from Conscience Bridge to Urquhart, David Boswell brother of Sir John Boswell of Balmuto, would return the silver bell prize the following year.

James died on 8 November 1610 and on 12 December Mr John Walker (unsuccessfully) and Mr William Smith (successfully) applied to the Town Council for the vacant position of Master of the Grammar School.

Widow and Children

After the death of her husband Janet Micklejohn was left a young widow with five children aged between ten years and thirteen months and no obvious means of support. Her best course would be to find a second husband as soon as possible and it seems that the CB of the gravestone was the one. There is no record of their marriage in the Dunfermline Register and it may have taken place in Burntisland, the home of her brother William. If CB was a Burntisland man the family probably moved there, renting out the Cross Wynd house to tenants. Support from a new husband would explain how Janet was able to afford a university education for her elder sons William and Robert, who gained Master's degrees. The youngest son, Walter,

was given a legal education, probably by an apprenticeship to a writer. Nothing is known of the future lives of Margaret and Elspeth.

The Cross Wynd House

On 25 May 1624 many houses in Dunfermline were badly damaged by a fire which began at about mid-day and burned for four hours, mainly affecting the High Street and Cross Wynd. The Dalgleish house, on the western side of the head of Cross Wynd, was completely destroyed in the fire and it fell to the eldest Dalgleish brother, Mr William then aged 22, to get it rebuilt. After the fire a fund was set up to pay for repairs and rebuilding, administered by a committee of local dignitaries and landowners. They seem to have been remarkably inefficient (or worse) in administering the fund and after four years, when it had become exhausted, many people had not received their money and it was alleged that many others had been given too much. At this point the Scottish Privy Council stepped in and ordered individuals who were said to have been overpaid to refund the money. One of those allegedly overcompensated was Mr William Dalgleish. He was said to owe £236 2s, but his appeal hearing before the Privy Council on 17 January 1628 reveals that the matter was not quite so straightforward.

At his appeal to the Privy Council Mr William was supported by Sir Robert Halket of Pitfirrane, Mr Harry McGill (the Dunfermline minister), Mr John Drummond and Patrick Cooper. He explained that he had been assigned extra funds in recognition of his father's 'pains and travails' in educating the sons of burgesses, gentlemen and noblemen when he was schoolmaster, and because he himself at the time of the fire was a student with no employment and no inheritance from his parents except the house in Cross Wynd. The local lairds would have given him money over and above what was due to him from the common fund, but he had refused their offer because he thought it would be unfair for him to be singled out from the rest of the townspeople. What is more, although he had been allocated £236 from the fund, by the time he began rebuilding the funds had been completely distributed by the Provost and Bailies. In fact, he had been forced to borrow in order to go on with the work and the house was still only half built. In the circumstances the Privy Council dropped the charge against him.

In his testimony Mr William also explained that although many houses had been badly damaged in the fire his was the only one that had been completely destroyed.

the combustion was so violent upon the complainer's house that almost all the household gear and stuff was wholly consumed and thereby the built walls, with the great and extreme heat, so ruined, cracked and rent that he was forced to rebuild his lodging from the very ground and foundation, which no other within the said Burgh was forced to do.



A stone inscription about the rebuilding of the Dalglish tenement (now known as the 'Firestone' and housed in Dunfermline museum) was still visible on the east wall of the house in the late nineteenth century. It was by then very worn and the translation of the text given in Henderson's *Annals of Dunfermline* may have been partly conjectural.

The translation of the text at the top of the stone is given in the *Annals* as:

Seeing that in so brief a space, on the 25th May, 1624, so much desolation was caused by a fire and the fury of the flaming blast, then O consider the dreadful blazing pyres which the breath of Jehovah, as if with a torrent of brimstone, will for ever keep in flames.' (Isaiah xxx. 33.)

The motto beside the shield translates as 'Except the Lord build the house' (the remainder of the quotation from Psalm 127 being. 'their labour is in vain that build it').

The words under the shield were translated:

Since new tabernacles to dwell in have, by a bountiful Providence, as you see, been bestowed upon us, O seek the city which has sure foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God' (Heb. xi. 10.) ending with "I beseech you, behold (in this dire calamity) the goodness and the severity of God.' (Rom. xi. 22.)

Henderson speculated at length about the significance of the shield but did not recognise it for what it is – the arms of the Dalglish family laid on its side and reversed. The initials M R D to the left of the shield stand for 'Mr Robert Dalglish', Mr William's younger brother who must have had the stone put up, probably at some time in the 1630s.

During nineteenth century alterations to the house three triangular stones, of the kind that were usually placed above the small storm windows in an attic. were uncovered, and are described in Henderson's *Annals*



One of them is definitely connected with Mr William. It read MWD A Fundamento Denuo Extruxit – 'M(r) W(illiam) D(algleish) built (this house) anew from the foundation'.

Another read 'Sustne Abstine 1626' ie 'Bear and Forbear 1626' and a case is recorded in the minutes of Dunfermline Town Council which may explain the date and the motto. In April 1625 Mr William complained to the Council that some timber props supporting the wall of his northern neighbours were getting in the way of the men working on his house. The neighbours replied that because Mr William's house had been completely demolished in advance of the rebuilding, the wall of their own tenement had been badly damaged and was only being kept up by the props. A committee inspected the site and found that Mr William's workman had caused damage by going onto the roof of the neighbouring tenement in order to get a joist onto the site of his house and he was ordered to pay 40 merks compensation. On the other hand, the neighbours were ordered to remove the props and demolish their wall 'with all possible diligence' and not to hinder Mr William's workers in future. All this cannot have made for neighbourly good feeling and it may be that the motto 'Bear and Forbear' was Mr William's way of trying to cool the situation.

From Henderson's description it is clear that the third triangular stone was badly defaced. What Henderson saw was: 'a circle floriated, with bar across the centre. Above the bar were two arrows; below it one arrow, with all heads pointing downwards'. This can only be a very worn Dalglish arms, this time the right way up and with the arrows pointing the right way. The initials I D almost certainly stand for James Dalglish, Mr William's father (and there was probably an M above the shield for 'Master') so this stone had probably been salvaged from the house that had been destroyed in the fire.



View of the head of Cross Wynd from Queen Anne St

This drawing of the head of Cross Wynd was made by the local artist Robert Somerville in about 1900. According to Somerville's accompanying notes the nearer house, with the crow-stepped gable, bore the 'firestone' on its east front, facing Cross Wynd, therefore it is the house that Mr William Dalgleish built. It has no neighbour on its north side so any buildings in that location must have been demolished at some time. The street is in fact wider at this point than the portion beyond Cross Wynd. The site is now (2015) occupied by the British Heart Foundation's furniture shop.

Mr Walter Dalgleish

Nothing more is heard of the house until August 1843, when it came into the possession of the youngest brother, Mr Walter Dalgleish, and his wife Marie Home. By the age of 20 Walter had qualified as a notary public, a clerk who dealt with non-criminal legal business such as deeds, contracts, bonds etc. At this time he was working for Colin Campbell of Glenorchy and his Protocol Book, in which all his legal documents were recorded, covers Fife, Argyll, Perth and Kinross. At some time in his twenties he married Marie Home and their daughter Christian was born in the early 1630s. There may have been other children but if so Christian was the only one who survived to adulthood.

Walter's employer Colin Campbell died childless in 1640 and was succeeded by his brother Robert. Walter was granted a pension of 100 merks (£66) a year and seems to have moved back to Dunfermline shortly after Colin Campbell's death, becoming Clerk to the Dunfermline Regality Court in the same year. His annual payment as Regality Clerk was 2 chalders (about 3000 kilos) of grain or its equivalent value in cash (about £160, depending on the current price of grain). By 1642 he had been elected as a member of the Dunfermline Kirk Session.

In August 1643 he and his wife were granted sasine of the house in Cross Wynd by his mother's brother William Micklejohn, a Burntisland sailor. Walter's mother, who had a liferent right to the house, possibly died at this time and the sasine was probably granted to give Walter full possession of the house. It was probably Janet Micklejohn and her second husband who placed the Dalgleish gravestone and if she did die in 1643 this would mean that it was placed at some time before her death but after the birth of Walter's daughter Christian in about 1630. Further Burntisland connections occurred in 1647 when Walter stood cautioner that a Burntisland skipper, John White, would not assault David Anderson, a Dunfermline burghess and again in 1655 when he mortgaged some land to another Burntisland skipper Patrick Angus.

Walter bought and sold property locally including the lands of the Wood and Wards of Garvock, a property near it called Newlands and a field to the north of Dunfermline called Jervis's Acre. In 1648 he was appointed clerk to the Synod of St Andrews and by 1658 he was also clerk to the Dunfermline Presbytery

In 1653 he was in furious dispute with William Wellwood portioner of Touch over the ownership of a prestigious seat in Dunfermline Kirk, situated in front of the seat of the Merchants' Guild. A search of the Kirk Session minutes proved that in 1604 the seat had been granted to the officials of Dunfermline Regality, so as Regality Clerk Walter had the right to sit in it with his wife.

Walter maintained his links with the Campbell family. Duncan Campbell of Auchlyne, the fifth son of Robert Campbell of Glenorchy, boarded with him in 1648, probably while attending Dunfermline Grammar School. On 11 July 1656 Walter's daughter Christian and Duncan Campbell were married. .

Marie and Christian

On 8 January 1659 Marie Home ratified Walter's sale of 2 acres of land. Walter died shortly afterwards and on 19 January the ministers of Dunfermline were ordered by the Presbytery to retrieve their books from his widow. Marie finally returned them in October of that year, after the Presbytery had promised to pay the arrears of fees due to her late husband. Walter was presumably buried in the family burial plot in Dunfermline churchyard.

Duncan Campbell and Christian Dalglish had eight children, two of whom were baptised at Dunfermline – Robert, their eldest son on 10 February 1659 and Christian on 10 May 1663. There are other mentions of Duncan in the Dunfermline records but the couple do not seem to have lived permanently in the town.

Marie Home is last mentioned in the Dunfermline records in 1675. By this time she would have been in her late 80s or her 90s so she probably died within the next few years and it was probably after her death and burial that Duncan Campbell, having ceased to have any connection with Dunfermline, sold the burial plot to Henry Elder. Henry certainly owned it by February 1688 when he confirmed to the Kirk Session his right to a burial place and throughstone (flat stone) on the east side of the path from the Kirkgate to the church porch in about the middle of the churchyard, 'which had once belonged to Walter Dalglish and Duncan Campbell'.

Turnbull

By 1700 the plot had changed hands once more and the new owners GT and his wife MC had the top two lines of the inscription removed and their own initials and date carved onto the stone. A later sale record of an adjoining stone confirms that GT was George Turnbull, tenant farmer of Urquhart near Dunfermline, whose wife was Margaret Currie. The couple had been married at Torry in 1680 and by 1700 had eight children, beginning with Patrick, born in 1682.

Margaret Currie was still alive in 1750 when one of her servant girls, Ann Reid, accused her grandson George Turnbull, now the tenant farmer at Urquhart, of being the father of her child. The Kirk Session heard witnesses but were unable to make a decision and referred the case to the Dunfermline Presbytery who ultimately absolved George of all blame. He himself was married to Janet Walker in 1753. The couple had at least six children, including two sons but nothing is known of them apart from their births between 1754 and 1769.

Kilpatrick/Main

At this point we have to skip forward 50 years to 1819, by which time the plot had come into the ownership of Thomas Kilpatrick. In 1834 it was granted to Thomas Main, weaver in Moodie St, as heir to his father who may have had a Kilpatrick ancestor. Thomas Main was probably the last person to be buried in this plot. He died of palsy in 1847 at the age of 60 and his widow Ann Chalmers and their sons all subsequently moved to Glasgow, where Ann died in 1864 of hepatitis and old age.