

WILLIAM SCHAW, MASTER OF WORKS 1584-1602.

(FROM THE MASONIC CONSTITUTION, SCOTLAND.)



THE name of William Schaw is so intimately connected with the history of Free Masonry in Scotland, a few particulars regarding him may not be unacceptable. He was born in the year 1550, and was probably a younger son of Schaw of Sauchie.* He appears from an early period of life to have been connected with the Royal Household. In proof of this we may refer to his signature attached to the original parchment-deed of the National Covenant, which was signed by King James the Sixth and his Household at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, 28th January, 1580-1. In 1584, Schaw became successor to Sir Robert Drummond of Carnock, as Master of Works. This high official appointment placed under his superintendence all the royal buildings and palaces in Scotland; and in the Treasurer's accounts of a subsequent period, various sums are entered as having been paid to him in connection with these buildings for improvements, repairs and additions. Thus, in September, 1585, the sum of £315 was paid "to William Schaw, his Majestie's Maister of Wark, for the reparation and mending of the Castell of Striueling"; and in May, 1590, £400, by his Majesty's precept, was "delyverit to William Schaw, Maister of Wark, for reparation of the hous of Dunfermling, befoir the Queenis Majesties passing thairto."

Sir James Melville, in his Memoirs, mentions, that being appointed to receive the three Danish Ambassadors who came to the country in 1585 (with

overtures for an alliance with one of the daughters of Frederick the Second), he requested the King that two other persons might be joined with him, and for this purpose he named Schaw and James Meldrum of Seggie, one of the Lords of Session. It further appears that Schaw had been employed in various missions to France. We know also that he accompanied James the Sixth to Denmark in the winter of 1589, previous to the King's marriage with the Princess Anna of Denmark. The marriage was celebrated by David Lyndsay, Minister of Leith, at Upsla, in Norway, on the 23rd November; and on the following morning the King, as "a morrowing gift," granted to the Queen's Grace, the Lordship of Dunfermline, and other lands in Scotland.

The King and his attendants remained during the winter season in Denmark. Schaw returned to this county on the 16th of March, 1589-90, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements for the reception of the Royal Party. This we learn from David Moysie, one of the Clerks of Privy Council, whose Memoirs furnish some minute and interesting particulars of occurrences at that time. He says, "About the 16th day of March, *William Schaw, Maister of Wark*, came from the King of Denmark, with direction to cause the schipis the Burrowis had appoynted mak out for bringing his Majestie homeward, to outred (prepare) the Abbey (of Holyroodhouse), and have all things in readiness for his Majestie's hame-cuming, quhilk suld be in Apryle nixt; schew-

* "Dom. Johannes Schaw de Arneumbrie Miles," was served heir of his father's brother (Patruus), William Schaw, Master of Works (Operum Praefectus), of the lands of Cowdon and Cavilston, in the shire of Kinross, 27th June, 1609; and of the lands and barony of Sauchey, and the lands of Wester Tulliecoutrie, in the shire of Clackmannan, 30th June, 1609.

ing also that the Quene was with bairne and that the King and his company had been weil entertained."

Schaw brought with him a paper subscribed by the King, containing the "Ordour set doun be his Majestie, to be effectuat be his Hienes Secreit Counsall, and preparit agane his Majestie's return in Scotland," dated in February, 1589-90. The King and his Royal Bride arrived in Leith on the 1st of May, and remained there six days in a building called "The King's Work," until the Palace of Holyrood was prepared for their reception.

Extensive alterations had evidently been made at this time on Holyrood, as a warrant was issued by the Provost and Council of Edinburgh, to deliver to William Schaw, Maister of Wark, the sum of £1,000, "restand of the last taxation of £20,000," granted by the Royal Boroughs in Scotland; the sum to be expended "in bigging and repairing of his Hienes Palice of Halyrudhouse," 14th March, 1589-90. Subsequent payments to Schaw occur in the Treasurer's accounts for broad scarlet cloth and other stuff, for "burde claythes, and coverings to forms and windows, bayth in the Kirk and Palace of Halyrudhouse."

On this occasion various sums were also paid, by a precept from the King, for dresses, etc., to the ministers and other persons connected with the Royal Household, "to buy thame cleithing, the tyme of his darrest bed-fellowis Marriage and Coronation." On this occasion we find William Schaw, Maister of Wark, received £133:6:8. The Queen was crowned on the 17th of May, and two days following she made her first public entrance into Edinburgh.

The inscription on Schaw's monument states that, in addition to his office of Master of Works, he was "Sacrificeremoniis Præpositus" and "Reginæ Quæstor," which Monteith has translated "Sacrist and the Queen's Chamberlain." This appointment of Chamberlain to the Queen evinces the high regard she entertained for him; but there can be no doubt that the former words relate to his holding the distinguished office of General Warden of the Ceremonies of the Masonic Craft, an office analogous to that of Substitute Grand Master, as now existing. It may also be proper to state that we must confound him with his namesake, William Schaw, his Majesty's Master Stabler, who, along with his brother, Mr. Peter Schaw, was slain in the tumult in the Palace of Holyrood, occasioned by Francis, Earl of Bothwell, on the 27th of December, 1591. The King himself, we are told, on the following day, came to St. Giles's Kirk and "made an oration anent the fray by Bothwell, and William Schaw's slaughter." Neither is he to be identified with another person of the same name, who was struck through the body with a rapier by Francis Mowbray, son of the Laird of Barnbogle, in April, 1596.

William Schaw died at the age of 52, in April, 1602, and was buried in the Abbey Church of Dunfermline, where a handsome monument was erected to his memory by Queen Anna, with the following inscription. His name and monogram, cut in a marble slab, was inserted: according to tradition, this was executed with his own hand, and it contains his Mason Mark.

INTEGERRIMO. AMICO. GVLIELMO. SCHAW.

VIVE. INTER. SVPEROS. AETERNVMQVE. OPTIME. VIVE.

HAEC. TIBI. VITA. LABOR. MORS. FUIT. ALTA. QUIES.

ALEXANDER SETONIVS. D. F.

D. O. M.

HVMILIS. HAEC. LAPIDVM. STRVCTVRA. TEGIT. VIRVM.

EXCELLENTI. PERITIA. PROBITATE. EXIMIA. SINGVLARI.

VITAE. INTEGRITATE. SVMMIS. VIRTVTIBVS. ORNATVM.

GVLIELMVM. SCHAW. REGIIS. OPERIBVS. PRAEFECTVM. SACRIS.

CEREMONIIS. PRAEPOSITVM. REGINAE. QVAESTOREM.
 EXTREMVM. IS. DIEM. OBIIT. 18. APRILIS. 1602.
 MORTALES. INTER. VIXIT. ANNOS. QVINQVAGINTA. DVOS.
 GALLIAS. MVLTAQVE. ALIA. REGNA. EXCOLENDI ANIMI. STVDIO.
 PERAGRAVIT. NVLLA. LIBERALI. DISCIPLINA. NON. IMBVTVS.
 ARCHITECTVRAE. PERITISSIMVS. PRINCIPIBVS. IMPRIMIS. VIRIS.
 EGREGIIS. ANIMI. DOTIBVS. COMMENDATVS. LABORIBVS. ET NEGOTIIS.
 NON. INDEFESSVS. MODO. ET. INSVPERABILIS. SED. ASSIDVE.
 STRENVVS. ET. INTEGER. NVLLI. BONO. NON CARISSIMVS. CVI.
 NOTVS. AD. OFFICIA. ET. DEMERENDOS. HOMINVM. ANIMOS. NATVS.
 NVNC. INTER. SVPEROS. AETERNVM. VIVIT.
 ANNA. REGINA. NE. VIRTVS. AETERNA. COMMENDATIONE.
 DIGNA. MEMORVM. MORTALITATE. LABESCERET. OPTIMI.
 INTEGERRIMIQVE. VIRI. MEMORIAE. MONVMENTVM. PONT. MANDAVIT.

(Translation of the above monument in "The Theater of Mortality," by Robert Monteith, Edinburgh, 1713.)

TO HIS MOST INTIRE FRIEND
 WILLIAM SCHAW.

Live with the gods, thou worthy, live
 for ever ;

From this laborious life death now doth
 thee deliver.

Alexander Seton, D. F.*

This small structure of stones covers a man of excellent skill, notable probity, singular integrity of life, adorned with greatest virtues, William Schaw, Master of the King's Works, Sacrist, and the Queen's Chamberlain. He died as above.

Among the living he dwelt 52 years ; he had travelled France and many other kingdoms for improvement of his mind ; he wanted no liberal art or science ; was most skilful in architecture ; he was early recommended to great persons, for the singular gifts of his mind ; he was not only unwearied with labors and business, and insuperable, but daily strenuous and strong ; he was most dear to every good man who knew him : he was born to do good offices, and there-

by gain the hearts of men : now he lives eternally with God.

QUEEN ANNA caused this monument to be erected to the memory of this most excellent and most upright man, lest his virtues, which deserve eternal commendation, should fail or decay by the death or mortality of his body.

Several years after Schaw's death, an application having been made by James Schaw, his executor, for the arrears of his salary, the matter was remitted to the Lords of Privy Council. In their answer, addressed to King James from Edinburgh, 10th October, 1612, it is stated that, having narrowly searched the whole bipast accounts betwixt Schaw's "entrie to the office and his deceis, the space of aughtene yeiris, having, by his gift, fyve hundreth merkis of yeirlie feal" or salary, they were satisfied that, for the whole period, with the exception of six years, such sums were still due ; and, it is added, "We may boldly alsua affirme, that in his lyfytyme, and during the tyme of his seruice, HE WAS A MOST PAINEFUL AND WELL AFFECTED SERVAND TO YOUR MAJESTIE."†

* The Latin distich was a tribute to Schaw's memory by Alexander Seton, afterwards Earl of Dunfermling, and Lord Chancellor of Scotland. He died in April, 1627, aged 67.

† Melrose Papers, printed for the Abbotsford Club, vol. 1, p. 95.

