

Friar Mark Hamilton's History, 1556.

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NLS Adv. MS 34.4.5 ff. 25r-28v.

The manuscript is a collection of extracts dated 1556 from a Glasgow cartulary.

NLS Adv. MS 29.5.3 is a transcript made c. 1796. The British Library has another transcript.

The 3,500 word Hamilton family history celebrates the Hamilton family and appears to have been composed for Regent Arran, perhaps to benefit his heir James Hamilton, 3rd Earl of Arran, as inheritor of the ancestral virtues and aspirant to the kingly virtues described.

The story is that of Walter Fitzgilbert and his sons, and the oration 'Gilbert Hamilton' gave at the funeral of Robert of Bruce. It is in many ways a work of fiction, including some historical detail taken from readily available sources in the *Scotichronicon*, mixed with other material revised and recreated for this narrative's purpose, such as the motif of a father and son in English and Scottish courts, the murder of the English favourite 'Spenser', and the fight at Kinneil Muir with 'Odomar Vallance' a composite character based on the historical figures of Aymer de Valance and Henry de Bohun, Earl of Hereford. Parts of the narrative are particularly attuned as propaganda to promote the Hamiltons as inheritors of an Anglophile tradition, perhaps with origins earlier in Regent Arran's career, or in his father's opposition to Regent Albany.

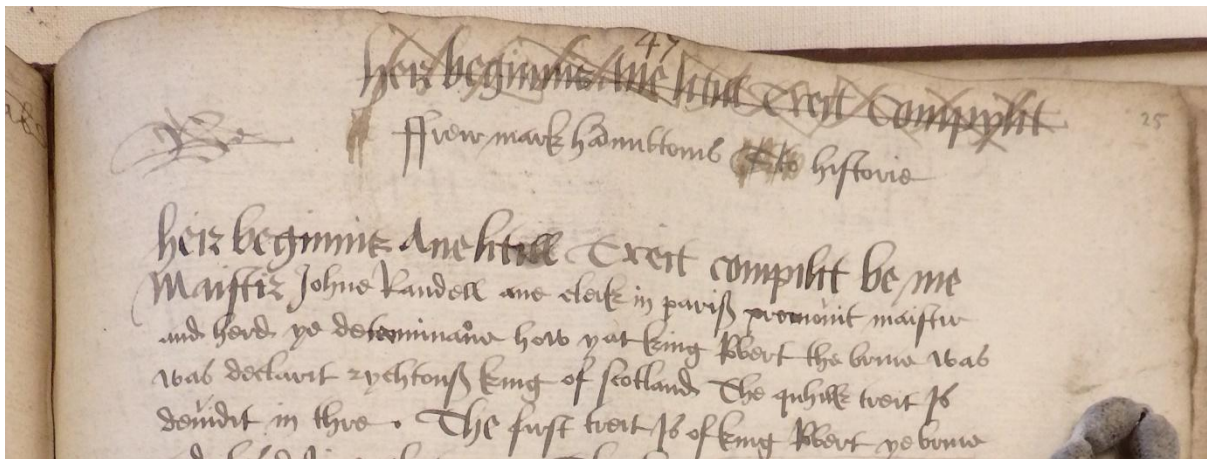
Transcription notes.

Line breaks have been left as in the manuscript.

'y' for 'ȝ',

'v' or 'w' for 'v' as modern usage.

Transcript



National Library of Scotland, Adv. MS 34.4.5, f.25r.

[f.25r]

heir beginnis ane litill treit compylit

Be- ffrier Mark Hammiltounis¹ stō historie

heir beginnis ane litill treit compylit be me

Maistir Johne Randell ane clerk in Paris promovit maistir and herd the determina[tio]ne how that King Robert the Bruce was declarit rychtous King of Scotland the quhilk treit is devidit in thre. The first treit is of King Robert the Bruce and his devine electione. The second of ane worthie man that ever was in the Ile of Britane borne in vertew manheid & singular justice that evir in Scotland bure office or yit in ony realme befor him or sen syne. his name is callit Erle Thomas Randell to King Robert the Bruce full sister sone. The thrid is of ane nobill man of his blude in England borne, The quhilk for greit vertew manheid & hie prudence in Scotland conquiest greit heretage² And als for trew service

¹ Regent Arran gave a Friar Mark Hamilton £4 for a habit in 1553; J. Foggie, *Renaissance Religion in Urban Scotland: The Dominican Order, 1450-1560* (Brill, 2003), 59, 285.

² 'Conquest great heritage' – acquired many lands, much the meaning of the next phrase.

to King Robert maid he gat greit riches and landis braid. And for the mair excellent favour to him King Robert had & lufe singular he gaif to him his sister douchter Ane ladie of vertew & greit honour that in the world was at that tyme Sche was full sister to Erle Thomas Randell. hir name was callit Isobell Ane madyn of aige of twenty yeris quhais posteritie perseveris yet with us in Scotland spred ane nowmer greit of pepill callit Hamyltoun sumpart changit fra the name of thair first noubil pro, genitour[is] & patriarche of that surname³ And now be the providence of god is mixt with the kinglie blude. This man,, nis name was callit ~~Hamtoun~~ Gilbert Hamtoun to Phillop Hamtoun Erle of Southe Hamtoun apperand air and eldest soun. As to the first to treit of King Robert quhilk was ane man of greit rentis and als of the linaige ffor he was Erle of Carrik in Scotland and lord of Annanderdaill, and alsua Erle of Huntting,, toun in Ingland and lord of Cleveland descendand of the kinglie bluid ryall of Scotland be the second douchtir of Erle David of Hunttingtoun ane ladie of greit vertew and hie honour, hir name was callit Isobell, fra quhome descendit King Robert lynniall as nepot to ye first Robert Bruce [f25v, p.48]

that maryit the said Isobell, the quhilk gat upoun hir Robert ye second the quhilk for his greit excellence vertew manheid and fairness in person was callit Robert the nobill and ffirst borne man & rychtius to the croune of Scotland, ffor Margaret the eldest sister had bot douchteris, This Robet maryit the air Carrik ane ladie of fifteen yeris of aige the quhilk revissit⁴ him for fairness & he

³ Regent Arran repeatedly told Ralph Sadler of his English 'Hamtoun' ancestry in 1543, to help establish his pro-English credentials, A. Clifford, *Sadler State Papers*, i, (Edinburgh, 1809), 216.

⁴ Perhaps a surprising use of 'ravished', the story is in Fordun.

gat on hir King Robert the Bruce of Scotland king maist rychtius quhais posteritie yit brukis the croune descendand be fra him be famell. And that king Robert was rychtus king of Scotland it was declarit at Paris in the parliament be the chancellor & all the facultieis baithe divine & humane theologie and ca[n]non⁵ as rychtius king to ring of Scotland to reull & gyde the common weill. And als he was chosin be god Almychty quhilk fortifiit him in all degree As Sanct Paull was chosin be Christ greit precheour to beir his name attour alquhair. And Sanct David the king of Jeurie for to ring quhome god providet in all thing And King Saull ejectit ffor his hie pride and inobedience And als for laking of justice quhen god send him upoun the wicket peple of Amalect quhome god commandit to destroy alhail⁶ baith man wiffis bairnis and bestiall and covett no thing of thair geir ffor the giff giftis of wicket men god not apprise⁷ Siclike was John Ballioun Balyeoun ejectit fra his kinglie croun and King Robert in his steid rychtius king chosin be god, It may be weill said of him that is wrtin in the buke of Wisdome, Per me Reges regnant & legum conditores justa decernunt Per me principes imperant et potentes justiciam decernunt⁸ Be me sayis god kinggis ringis & makaris of the lawis decernis just thingis. Be me princes hes Empyre and potent men justice can decerne And as Danyiell said to Nabochodonor in his fourt cheptour, he that is maist he `hye' in the hevin hes dominioun in the kingdome of man And quhome to he plessis he giffis [?if]⁹ And of his kingdome the maist humill man he statutis & ordains

⁵ Master John Randell, the presumably fictional author of the source, claims to have heard the declaration in Paris made before the faculties of the Sorbonne.

⁶ `alhail' – all whole, completely. Saul was abandoned by God because he did not completely destroy the Amalekites.

⁷ Compare with the quotation from Hosea below.

⁸ Proverbs 8:15.

⁹ `if' - ?lif, for `life'.

above ffor prydfull men & wrangis he will nocht thoill to ryng lang
As it is writtin in Osea Ipsi regnaverunt & non ex me principes
exstiterunt & non cognovi.¹⁰ Thay haif rounng as kingis bot
not be me thay war callit princes bot I knew tham nocht And
to this purpos saithe god to Samuell quhairfour mournis yow
for Saull sen I haif cassin him fra his croune that he [?net] mot
nocht ring and be the king upoun Israell ffor his pride [?contemning]
[f26r, p.49.]

off my commandementis inobedience and liking laking of justice Pridfull
men plesit nevir god sen the beginning bot Isaias sayis he
that is ane worthie prince sall consider & think quhat is worthie
& condigne for ane prince ffor he hes bot ane office in the
Eird undir the hie `king &` juge in hevin to quhome he sol sould con,,
forme his will and office as the kinglie prophete & juge
Sanct David said deus judex Justus fortis & patiens. God is
ane just juge nocht blind bot rychtuis stark and patient Quhat
Juge in eird is nocht sa is nocht rychuis kinggis ar oblist be thair
professione[?r] to do justice to all men to defend the rycht and
punnis the wrang ffor that is ane kinglie office committit to
thame in Eird be god in Hevin as the kinglie proffite Sanct
David said honor regis ~~judicium~~ judicium diligit¹¹ And quha[?]]
that takis that office upoun tham & dois nocht this salbe objectit
as King Saull was **And quha that dois it weill salbe
honorit in Erd & hevin.**

¹⁰ Hosea 8:4, They have reigned, but not by me. Leaders have emerged, and I did not recognize them. [Their silver and their gold, they have made into idols for themselves, so that they might cross over].

¹¹ Psalm 98:4.

Heir beginnis ane litill treit
of the surname of the Hamiltouns
the quhilk is devidit in thre treittis.

The first treit is of thair first nobill progenitour
and patriark of that surname how he cane first in
Scotland & of his gracious beginning The second treit is
of his greit vertewssness verteuisnes & how he conquiest
his landis and heretaige The third of mony nobill men that
hes discendit & cum of him As to the first he was borne in
the Realme of Ingland & of the hie nobill build of Ingland
the Erle of South Hamtoun eldest sone and apperand rychtius
air to him his fadirris name was called Phillop & his awn
called Gilbert eftir the Erdome baith called Hamtoun This
Phillop was ane man of hie prudence & frome his youthe ex,
cersit in weiris and tender¹² servitour to king Edward of that
name the first king of Ingland the quhilk for his lang legis
was callit Edwerd withe the lang schankis and this Phillop
had bene with King Edward oft tymes in Scotland in his greit
weris and was send to ye castell of Bothwill with utheris divers
nobill Inglisman to be principall capitaine thairin under Odomer
Vallance under King Edward of Scotland gret leutennent¹³
[f26v, p.50.]

The quhilk Phillop put his eldest sone Gilbert to the prince of Ingland
in to his youthe & tendir service that evireane of tham mycht pleis the
tua kinggis threw trew & tendir service and that his sone Gilbert
throw guid & trew service mycht pleis the prince as his fadir did the

¹² 'tender' – gentle, as in gentleman.

¹³ Phillip Hamtoun's commander was Aylmer de Vallance, great lieutenant of Edward's Scotland.

kinggis grace and sua thair guid maneris & service suld mak
thame acceptabill to thair maisteris And alsua thairfor to be
rewardit be yair sourance thir tua nobill men The tane re
remaining in Scotland & the uthir in Inland¹⁴ In this mene tyme Odomar
Vallance gydeit Scotland at his plesour and als at his will quhethir
it was rycht or wrang ffor na man mycht repreif him nor yit mycht
resist him. This Odomar Vallance was ane man borne in Walis
of sober blude & als of lynaige hie montit up in honour and greit
estemit in weris & na less in vassalaige, ffor he feildit King Robert
the Bruce first at Methven a littil eftir his corona[tio]ne and put him
to flicht with ane greit discomfitour and als with ane defamatioun
of all the pepill of Scotland, Thinkand and sayand yat it was
ane evill signne to bein sa sone eftir his corona[tio]ne Bot king
Robert fled with sic wisdom & ordinance that he kepit his pepill
fra greit dampnage Alsua this Odomar Vallance was ane
greit turrane¹⁵ on Scottis natioun for he banist all the bairnis
& wiffis of thame that tuk part with King Robert against him
sua that the greit ladeis & women of guid was constrenit to fle
to wilderness & woddis for sauftie of thair livis¹⁶ And to eschew
his crudelities ffor he was greit leutenant governour general
of all Scotland baith of Scottis & Inglis & mony of all the greit
strenthis of Scotland was undir him At that tyme & speciallie
the castell of Boithwill that tyme was the key of Cliddisdale and
als was the flour of Wester Scotland and garnist with ane
greit powar of Inglis.

¹⁴ This is tale of a father and a son. The model would appear to be a tale of two separated brothers growing up and serving in two different royal courts. Its rhetoric effect may have been to advocate peace between England and Scotland.

¹⁵ 'turrane' – tyrant.

¹⁶ The account of the battle of Methven and the women in the woods seems to be taken from Fordun.

Heir Beginniss the table of the surnamis of the
Hammitons of the quhilk the first of them that was thair first
Nobill progenitour & patriark of that surname was callit
Gilbert Hamptoun to Phillippe¹⁷ Hamptoun Erll of Southt Hamptoun
apperand air & ej eldest sone the quhilk come in Scotland for the
slauchter of ane tendir servitour of King Edwarttis callit Johne
Spensar ane man of sober bluid and als of vile linage bot he
obtenit the kinggis favoris and he was tenderlie ressavit
[f27r, p.51.]

with King Robert and sworne trew Scottisman for it was for King Robertis
saik that he slew the said Spensar as it is at mair lenthe contenit
in till the tretis of the samyn And he come first in to Scotland
the sevin yeir of King Robertis ring and the second of King
Edwarttis callit Carnaver of Yngland the second King of that
name and tua yeris befor the field of Bannokburn that samyn
yeir that Erle Thomas Randell wan the castell of Edinburcht
fra the inglismen that is to say the yeir of god ane thousand
thre hundreth and twelf yeris. This Gilbert was ane nobill
man of hie spreit and als of hie greit curage as all his actis and dedis
weill previs He was with King Robert in Scotland in mony scharp
weris and greit japdeis & was with him in the field of Bannokburn
and was ane of the sevin knychtis that kepit the kingis person
the quhilk for his trew service and grit manheid he maid him knycht
& gaif him landis braid The first the barony of Machanshire
in the quhilk it was schawin to him in revela[tio]ne be ane visioun
in ane dreame that he and his posteritie sould bruik the saidis

¹⁷ 'Phillipe' inserted into a blank space.

landis in greit felicitie and alsua the landis at that tyme
callit Cadzow be quhat ressoun I can nocht schwa you bot now
thair ar callit the landis of Hammyltoun be the ground lord &
possessour of the samyn This Gilbert for King Robertis plesour
slew king the greit lutennand and of Yngland upoun Kynnele mur
The quhilk for his greit hardiment and als for the deid sa excelland
he gaif to him all the landis of samyn And rycht sua to his spous
ane of the worldliest ladiest that was in that tyme scho was
King Robertis sister douchtir and till erle Thomas Randell his full
sister quhais name was callit Isobell ane madin of twenty yeris
of aige of vertew & of greit honour maist excelling undir the quene
for that tyme the quhilk The quhilk bure to hir spous mony & divers noble sonnies
the first King Robert baptist at fontane & callit him Robert till
his name ye quhilk deceissit within young aige infra infantia
& maid his parentis rycht dolourous The secound son sche buir
Walter the greit stewart of Scotland and [?leur] till King Robert
quhilk Baptist him at fontane and callit him Walter eftir his
name the quhilk succedit in ane nobill man[?er] & servit god weill & his
soverane. But we will returne to Schir Gilbert the quhilk
was ane man of hie prudence & als of great spereit & bald of
curaige as all his actis & dedis weill s[h]ouis ffor had he bene
[f27v, p.52]

ffebill in spireit and als waik in to wit he had nocht temptit sic ane hie act¹⁸
to slay the greit luftenand of Yngland with sa greit spireit of manheid
ffor the quhilk King Robert gaif till him his armis till weir in
Scotland thre sinkfulzeis in ane bludy field the sinkfulzeis of the
hous of Southe Hamptoune the reid field be slauchter donne be him

¹⁸ 'He would not have undertaken such a daring act if he had been weak willed'.

The [ʔverranen[c]e]¹⁹ in taiking he was ane man of weir²⁰ The saw was eikit be the first Lord Hamiltoun And the schipe be the first Erle of Arrane his soun. This nobill man Schir Gilbert perseveret continuallie with King Robert in trew service on till the end of his days And was at his buriing in to the Abbay of Dunfermling and maid ane singular orisoun in maner of deploratione in his greit laude and commendation ffor he was ane natural oratour that bourn was that tyme in thai dayis in Inglis toung and could exprime maist mater in litill roume²¹ The laif of his verteous lif & guid conversatione honorabill dedis & end of his dayis ar written at mair lenthe in to the trefy that Maister Johne Randall maid of him.²²

The second of tham was called Walter till his name as the ressoun schawis befor gane. This was ane mervalus fair man and als sa stark & stout of person swyft to ryne w[r]eschell or cast the stane schut in ane stark bow or ryne ane speir or till exerte ony uyir deid of chavelry or armis Or till offir him till ony greit deid of vasalege agains ony uthir that was within the realme at that tyme or yit in ony uthir realme that wald forgather or cum forganis him ffor he was ane man of hie statur and Rycht weill furnessit thairtill greit coistit

¹⁹ 'ʔverranence' – apparently the truthfulness of the red field as a fit token of Gilbert's warrior prowess.

²⁰ Compare the description of heraldic red in L.A.J.R. Houwen, *The Deidis of Armorie*, vol. 1 (STS, Edinburgh, 1994), 11,

'The first colour eftir the metallis is red, that is callit in armorie guellis and is lyknyt to the fir, the quhilk is the maist schynand element and the maist <noble>; and is liknyt til a richt precius stane callit the ruby, quhilk is comperit and callit hardyness; and tharfor it is said that nan suld ber that colour bot he war noble, mychti, and hardy; and it is a noble vertu quhen a noble-man of noble lignage is in batell and has hadyness pruffit in him sua that he may be worthi to ber this noble colour; and thus is blasonyt in thre maneris; till hardyment, in precius stanys, and in his proper colour.'

²¹ 'maist mater in litill roume' – admirably concise.

²² Master John Randall of Paris is the fictional author of a presumably fictional source text.

& braid schulderit greit craiggit & hedit reid in visage & glaffand reid harit scharp of sycht and gude of persaving schort in wordis & Rycht effectuus stark in his armes and lyve & lycht in all maner of sortis baith play and ernest lik till his tua maist noble vailyeand enemies emeis King Robert & Erll Thomas Randell for starkness in play `& part tekinnit him to King Robert for similitude of natur & utheris till erle Thomas²³ Thir properties natural corporall he had of his nobill fadir & moder the quhilkis war baith of hie & greit statur and sua rycht weill mixt thairintill bot sumthing differand for his fadir was broune dosk harit & paill in visage and his moder was reid harit & reid in visage Als sua he was rycht weill complexionat efter the qualities of the four elementis bot he had in dominin[ati]one the complexioun of sanguine & weill mixit with colereane the quhilk inclinith him to blythness [f28r, p.53]

And alsua to greit science ffor he was ane man weill sene in to letteris and specialie in to grammer & poesis And was ane cunning versificatour in Ynglis & Latin toung weill instructit be his maister & alsua be his nobill fadir quhilk was ane natural Oratour at that tyme flurrissit in Ynglis toung And he litill behind him, alsua he was ane perfite musicinar baith preckit singing & deskene and could exerte & use playing & singing weill upoun all instrumentis musicall for he was brocht up in to the Abbay of Dunfermling amangis honorabill & devoit religious men quhilkis at the command of his fadir techit him the samyn.

[?Ad] [?Idem]²⁴

About this tyme ane Inglisman of nobill bluid namit Hamtoun

²³ Added emendation overline, emphasising that Walter Hamilton had an admixture of the good qualities found in King Robert and Earl Thomas Randolph.

²⁴ Illegible heading, possibly 'Ad Idem' – the same, same material as above.

to eschew the hatred of King Edward fled to King Robert in Scotland
 this Hamtoun eftir the battel of Bannokburne was in the king of
 Ynglandis hous at Londoun and had ane singular favour to King
 Robert oftymes avansing his greit manheid and vertew Quhill
 at ye last Johne Spensar rycht familiar & tendir servitour to King
 Edward howbeit he was of wild & obscure linage, tuk sic
 displesour for avansing of King Edwardis enemye that he
 pullit haistlie his suerd & hurt Hamtoun howbeit he was litill
 the war, Hamtoun impatient to suffir this outrage as
 man of hie spireit & curaige ceissit nocht fra continuall wait
 quhill at the last he slew this Spensar and because he was coun,,
 salit be his freindis to eschew ye Kingis hatred he fled with greit
 diligence in Scotland and was tenderlie ressavit be King Robert
 And gat the landis of Cadzow quhais posteritie perseveres
 yit amangis us spred in greit nowmer of pepill callit Hammyltoun
 sumpart changit fra the name of the first begynnar.

Oratio Gilberti Hammiltoun in funera Roberti Brus Regis

O god eternall & king immortale, be quhome erdlie thingis
 Kingis & temporall in this world of miserie dois ring resaif
 the saull and spireit of our maist nobill and worthy maister to
 thy kingdome of hevin quhair yow with angellis cleir and sanctis
 feir in gloir triumphant, Thy servantis dois reward moir
 tham thai haif desernit heir him to reward for his trew saule
 in joy eternall quhill in this life culd the deserne with spreit infa-
 tigabill quhill that his life in erd may lest with hart & mynd
 [f28r, p.54]

constant the rycht of Scotland ay for to defend with manheid invincible
 his body evir for to spend for Scotlandis common weill the charge of weris
 ay for to failye withe all kind of jeappedry. Lat nevir his saull
 thoall pane nor pyne in hell nor purgatorie bot with the most nobill kings

in hevin to ring sen first the world began him still ordour & place at his degre eftir thi hie [?prudens] with halie King David king maist victorius quhilk in his tyme slew baith lyon and beir and als greit Goliath aucht hundreth men to ground [?persternit] at ane on sett I traist this king did litill less eftir his estait²⁵ And als with halie King Josias king moist innocent the quhilk wes trew to god and man with faith inviolate And als 'nocht' worthy Ezechias king maist vertuos quhilk god his dayis culd plaige ffor his greit haliness And als with wise King Salomon gif I dar hardly say it quhilk in erd had nevir na peir in wisdome rychess & hie honour And als with all the verteous Kingis that evir in Scotland rang sen first that Fergus buir the croun or yit in the greit Ile of Bertane eftir maist nobill king Arthur or yit in all the world sic breid eftir greit king Charillis the mayne he war mair worthie I dar 'weill' say the greit Empirie of Rome na of pur Scotland to haif iewsit the croune. In him was manheid 'with' greit wisdome In him was treuthe lautie to god & man In him was haliness with hie devotione In him was all godlie vertew & morall, ffaith houp & cheritie, hie prudens justice fors & temperans²⁶ with all uthir kynds of vertewis In him was great patience in all adversitie profound benevolence with all liberalitie In him was constans lautie with perseverance In him was gentilness fredome to friends & fays his enemeis him dred for his greit manheid misdoweris & schievis for his scharp justice, his awin trew servandis him lovit for his vertuosness.

²⁵ 'I trust that Robert did as much as King David according to his own estate and position'.

²⁶ In the Regiment of Princes tradition these four virtues decorate the pillars of a throne, M. A. Manzalaoui, *Secretum Secretorum: Nine English Versions*, vol. I, (Oxford, 1977).

Constant The kyng of Scotland ay for to defend abt madford Inimitable
 his body abt for to stand for Scotlandis qmomy well So large of abour
 ay for to sailze witho all kmg kynd of Leppodry. lat notu his paine
 Soill paine nor pynne d sell nor purgatione bot w^t ye must nobill kmgge
 d hebin to zmg son fust ye wauld logan hm still adom e plaw at
 his degre estur ye hie penden^t w^t hahie kmg d and kmg must betorne
 quill d his tyme fleas bat hon and bow and als greit schab
 A ncht hundre^t md to ground pfermt at and on sett. In Cryst ye
 kmg did hitill less estur his estur and als w^t hahie kmg Josub.
 kmg must Innocont ye quill was writ to god and ma w^t fust
 Inwrit And als w^t worthy Eschab kmg must betornoff q^t god
 his durye end plonge for his greit halines And als w^t wise
 kmg salomon gif I dar haudh say It quill d ord had notu na
 pow d bydome zygess e hie fone And als w^t all the betornoff
 kmgis yat abt in Scotland kmg son fust yat feugis enu ye nom
 or zit d ye greit Jo of bartane estur must Nobill kmg dufur
 or zit d all ye wauld sic biend estur greit kmg charitib ye mayne
 he war man wouge I dar say ye greit Empue of kme Ma of
 p^ru Scotland to dar wouge ye nom. In hm was madford w^t greit
 wysdome In hm was trouthe lante to god e ma In h^e was salmes
 w^t hie denatione In hm was all godlie betorn e morall And hie
 e ferthe hie penden^t Justie forb e temperant w^t all bye
 kynd of betornib In h^e was greit patencie d all aduocine
 p^ru condolous w^t all liberalite In hm was constant lante
 w^t p^rsonaruo In hm was gentilnes fudome to fiend e fone
 hie onemerib hm died for his greit madford Misdebaute e
 schewis for his searp Justie his allm was frandib hm lobit
 for his betornoffness.