

Scalan News

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38

Contents : Bishop George Hay By Ann Dean:Students By S. Toovey:Alexander Innes:John Farquharson:James Cameron:William Hay:George Matheson:Peter Hay:Paul McPherson:Master,William Duthie:Walk from ScalanTo CulanduimBy S Toovey:Letter from the President:Points of Interest:Master,William Gray:Office Bearers



Bishop Hay,s Chalice

Bishop George Hay

George Hay was born in Edinburgh in 1729 of Episcopalian / Jacobite parents. Aged sixteen he started the study of medicine as a surgeon's apprentice and, with other students, tended the wounded Jacobites at the battle of Prestonpans in 1745; for four months he acted as medical attendant to the Jacobite army. He was taken prisoner and after three months in Edinburgh Castle was moved to London for a further year's imprisonment. His interest in the Catholic Faith was awakened in London; back in Edinburgh he was given instruction. As a Catholic he could attend university but could not graduate in medicine so he left Scotland as a ship's surgeon on a ship bound for the Mediterranean. He entered the Scots College, Rome in 1751 and did not return to Scotland until after his ordination in 1759.

Preshome was his home for the next eight years as curate to Bishop James Grant, who sent him to Edinburgh in 1767. There he purchased a house in Blackfriars Wynd, which became both chapel to the Edinburgh Mission and priest's house. In 1769 George Hay was consecrated as Bishop Grant's coadjutor in the upstairs chapel at Scaln by Bishop Grant assisted by Bishop Hugh Macdonald, returning afterwards to Edinburgh.

In 1780 Bishop Grant died in Aberdeen, and after two years when Bishop Hay was the sole bishop in the Lowland District, John Geddes was appointed his coadjutor, consecrated at Madrid, as he was then Superior at Valladolid. After John Geddes's return to Edinburgh to look after the southern part of the district, Bishop Hay went north to Aberdeen, living in the chapel house there from 1782 to 1788. He made lengthy walking tours throughout the District and spent as much time as he could spare at Scaln, which he loved, arranging if possible to hold the Annual Meetings of the bishops and administrators. It was at Scaln in 1780 in a large downstairs room that he consecrated Alexander Macdonald as bishop of the Highland District, to replace John Macdonald who died in 1779.

In 1772 he visited Douai and in 1781 he went to Rome to ask for amendments to be made to Bishop Nicholson's *Statuta*. During both visits he begged for an increase in the annual grant from Rome. The problems at Scaln weighed heavily on him— poor quality masters and spendthrift ones, and the ill health of others. The year's 1788 to 1791 he spent at Scaln as Rector, completing the improvements to the house, mainly the raising of the roof to give better accommodation for the students. During those years the Annual Meeting were held at Gibston or Mortlach, Huntly.

The last three decade of the 1700s were worrying ones for Bishop Hay. From the 1770s onward there had been serious misunderstandings between the Scots College, Paris and the Scottish bishops. The letters between Principal Alexander Gordon and Bishop Hay grew increasingly acrimonious and unreasonable and Bishop Geddes was sent to find a solution but failed. The French Revolution settled the problem; the College was closed and was lost. The invasion of Italy by Napoleon meant the closure of the Scots College, Rome temporarily between 1798 and 1829.

In 1793 there was a partial repeal of the Penal Act against Catholics and Bishop Hay felt it was now safe to look for bigger premises 'for his little seminary' and not so remote. He acquired a 99 year lease on the farm of Aquhorties near Inverurie which became Scaln's successor, the boys and their master moving there in 1799. In that year his friend and coadjutor John Geddes died at Aberdeen after a long illness. His successor, Alexander Cameron had already been appointed in 1797, after Bishop Geddes had resigned. Bishop Hay himself, living at Aquhorties, officially retired in 1805 and died in 1811. He was buried at St. Ninian's Chapel on the Fetternear Estate, then the home of the Leslies of Balquhain and Fetternear.

By Ann Dean

Alexander Innes

Student 1763-1764

Alexander Innes was born at Balnacraig in 1750 the son of James Innes. He entered the Scots College Paris in July 1764 at the age of fourteen. He was ordained in 1777 and spent a year at Drummond Castle; from here he returned to his old college as Prefect of Studies, a position he held for about eleven years. In 1792 he was appointed Procurator, the same year the French revolution broke out. Prior to this, the extreme unrest in France led to talks between the hierarchy of the college regarding selling the building and its assets and establishing the college elsewhere. To do this the French government had to give permission as the building was on French soil. Before anything was resolved external forces took over. Civil war broke out in 1792. The college was twice invaded by army rebels. Bishop Gordon (Principal) decided to leave Paris taking the Book of Grisy and the 'Statutes of the College'; he regarded these as the title deeds of his office as principal. Alexander Innes refused to leave and was sentenced to death; he was reprieved on the downfall of Robespierre in July 1794. He died in September 1803.

This marked the end of the Scots College Paris. The college had been in steady decline for forty years. Having weathered Unigenitus, the spectre of Jansenism kept rearing its head so it is not surprising that the internal problems coupled with the revolution closed the college down in 1792.

John Farquharson

Student 1764-1768

Master 1783-1784

John Farquharson was born in 1748 possibly near Auchriachan, Glen Conglass. He entered Scalan in 1764 where he spent four years. It should be noted that he was a fluent Gaelic speaker. One of his contemporaries was John

Patterson who was appointed a Scalan master in 1770. John Farquharson left for the Scots College Rome in 1768 where he spent a year; then entered the Scots College, Douai (France) to finish his studies. He was ordained there in 1776 and appointed Prefect of Studies the same year. In 1781 he was recalled to take up a post on Strathavon. The present chapel in Tomintoul, Strathavon, Saint Michael's was built in 1836 near to the original one built by Donald Stuart in 1788 just off the main street of the village. Previously the chapel was situated on a green swathe of land between Auchriachan and Findron near the river Conglass where, it is said, the priest's well ran down to the river.







Old Scalan Croft wall running bottom to top right

In 1883 he was appointed master at Scalan the same year as the 'Weaver's Croft' came into the Seminary's possession. The land was a 'wild Muir' and he ordered it to be ploughed to improve the land. He oversaw the building of a stone dyke which is still in evidence to enclose it from the common grazing. Thirty wedders (sheep) were purchased to graze the remaining grass. January 1784 saw a bad winter get worse with heavy snow and freezing winds. His health deteriorated and didn't improve until the summer when he was offered the post of Principal of the Scots College, Douai, a position he held until the college closed in 1793.







Wall behind Scalan on track to Slochd

From 1793 to 1814 he moved to five different missions; in 1815 he settled in Paris where he died in 1817.

Points arising from this article.

1 Was William Grant the priest who baptised Abbé Paul McPherson born on 4th March 1756? William Grant was arrested in June 1750 for backing the Jacobites, released and went to ground—was he one of the itinerant priests?

2 Douai Seminary 1568-1793. Douai is near the Belgium border. It was founded by the Jesuits (Society of Jesus) for the training of Scottish Roman Catholic exiles for the priesthood. The priests were to work for the conversion of England. The Old Testament of the Douai Bible was issued from here in 1616. The college was put on a sound financial footing by Father Creighton in France and Flanders and Father Parsons in Rome and Madrid. The Jesuits were expelled from France in 1764 but the college was allowed to function under a rector from their body until it closed in 1793.

James Cameron

Student 1764-c.1769

James Cameron was born in 1755 at Dalbrechie. He was enrolled at Scalan in 1764 where he spent four years. There is no record where he carried out his studies, when he left or where he was ordained. He had four stations between 1778 and 1789. Entering Stobhall (Perthshire) in 1789 and is recorded as being insane; he died there in 1813.

William Hay

Student 1765-1769

William Hay was born in Flanders near the Belgian French boarder in 1751. He enrolled at Scalan in 1765 and studied there for about four years. He travelled to Rome then on to Douai in France where he finished his studies and was ordained. He returned to Scotland and took up teaching at Stobhall

In 1783he was dismissed from his duties and in 1786 took up a position of tutor in America.

I can find no more mention of him.

George Matheson

Student 1767-1770

George Matheson was born at Bellie, Fochabers in January 1756 and enrolled in Scalan in 1767 where he stayed until 1770 when he travelled to the Scots College Valladolid in Spain to finish his studies. He was ordained there in September 1778. He returned to Scotland via Bilbao to serve as a priest in Auchenhalrig (situated between Focabers and Buckie) from 1779 until his death in 1828.

Peter Hay

Student 1767-1770

There is no record where or when Peter Hay was born. He is recorded as entering Scalan in 1767 and leaving in 1770 to attend the Scots College Paris where he was ordained in 1777. He was appointed Prefect of Studies the same year. He returned to Scotland in 1781 to take up a post in Auchenhalrig working with George Matheson who died in 1828. Peter Hay died in 1783.

Paul McPherson

Student 1768-1769

Edition 32 May 2006 I wrote a lengthy article on Paul McPherson; he was a true local 'loon' (boy) born on March 4th 1756 at Scalan Town. His parents were Paul McPherson and Janet Cummin, both local Catholics; he was educated at a small school at Clashnoir and by a woman living in Scalan Town. Before enrolling at Scalan in 1768 aged 12 years Mr Geddes, later master and bishop, gave him religious instruction and writing. In 1769 he left for the Scots College Rome to study and owing to health reasons finished his course at Valladolid in Spain where he was ordained. He spent the majority of his life working abroad hence Abbé Paul McPherson.

He remained true to his birth place and never forgot his people of the Braes.

Since 2006 I have gleaned a little more about Paul. He was baptised by William Grant. Is this the Father William Grant from Tombreck(achie) who came from a 'Popish family'? William Grant was administering to his people in 1737; being banished from the kingdom in 1750 for having strong Jacobite leanings. He could have sought refuge

in the Scalan district and become an itinerant priest until his death in 1763.



Giuseppe Macpherson (self portrait) from
collection in Palazzo Degli Uffizi-Firenze





Miniature by G. Macpherson

Whilst in Rome in 1777 Paul McPherson met with a relation Donald McPherson aged 90 years, who had lived in Tuscany since he was about thirty years old. He was one of two 'running footmen or volantes' who travelled with Alexander the 2nd Duke of Gordon (1678-1728) when he visited Cosimo III, Gran Principe of Tuscany. The footmen are described as very fit, sturdy, handsome highlanders with warlike countenances dressed in appropriate costumes; full highland dress? It is said they caused quite a stir and many admiring glances. Donald remained behind in the service of the Gran Duke. A staunch Catholic he married and had two sons.

1. The elder, Giuseppe; a painter of portraits and miniatures, was born in Italy, of Scottish extraction, on 19th March 1726 and died shortly after 1779. He worked in London, Paris, Milan and Germany; and was married with one daughter. She married a Siennese (Siena is an area in Tuscany, Italy). He spent her money and left her destitute. On her father's death in 1779 she inherited some enamels and a portfolio of drawings which she sold to Pryse Lockhart Gordon. 12 of the miniatures are in the possession of Her Majesty the Queen.
2. The second son was a captain in the Grand Duke of Tuscany's army; was married and had numerous children. There are no further records available

William Duthie

Assistant Master 1737 - Master 1741-1758

William Duthie was born and raised as an Episcopalian but converted to Catholicism in his thirties. He studied in Aberdeen and was sent to Paris in 1732 to complete his training. Like so many students he got entangled in the Jansenism controversy. He was unwilling to subscribe to Unigenitus and in July received minor orders from Bishop Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, a notorious Jansenist. The ceremony occurred in secret at the Bishop's Chapel in St. Lyre. It was a year before Bishop Gordon found out; by then Duthie had signed up to Unigenitus and insisted on being ordained in Paris in 1737 to prove his orthodoxy.

Mr. Duthie returned to Scotland in 1737 to help out at Scalan and the Glenlivet station. He saw the turf house replaced by stone and mortar but still with a thatched roof. The site chosen was adjacent to the old dwelling which probably became a byre. Fortunately building was completed before the worst winter and summer on record 1739-1740. He coped with the ensuing famine travelling the district offering help and comfort to the many in need.

He was appointed master in September 1741 releasing Alexander Gordon to teach in Edinburgh. His first task on being appointed was to ensure that the students followed the rules laid down by Bishop Gordon and to stabilise the seminary. Not an easy task as the whole area was in quiet rebellion which culminated in the 1745 uprising. In 1745 Charles Edward Stuart landed at Eriskay. A large contingent of men left the Scalan area to join the Jacobite cause guaranteeing that the district would be controlled by government troops. In the spring of 1746 Scalan had everything to fear. On May 16th 1746 the Hanovarian troops moved up the Braes destroying homes and buildings. The master had time to move furniture, books, vestments etc. into safe hiding places. He sent the students to safe houses and then left for the hills to wait and watch. The seminary was torched and all that remained were the walls and ashes. Duthie sent the boys home and he travelled 1 mile to Culanduim, by the Fannich burn. A student, Johnnie Gordon, kept in touch and late 1746 saw him living and studying with his master. On Bishop Smith's instruction Mr. Duthie held on to the Scalan lease. Mr. Duthie and Johnnie moved to assist Mr Tyrie in Glenlivet but returned to the Braes in 1747. By early 1749 he had a new house built at Scalan using the existing foundations and walls. The college was up and running again enjoying peace and quiet. There were two pupils and two servants; the soldiers presenting no problems.



The master felt free to move around and make a start on enlarging the house. After months of calm Mr. Duthie received word that a warrant was out for his arrest and he immediately left for the Lettoch farm which was near enough for him to keep an eye on Scalan. The troops arrived, searched and left; this performance occurred several months later but once again the 'bird had flown'. By the summer of 1756 the troops were deployed elsewhere and Scalan was able to function normally.

In the same year Mr. Duthie asked to be transferred owing to his declining health but his wish wasn't granted until 1758. In 1757 Johnnie Gordon died at the age of 28 years with his old master at his side. This young priest had shared many hardships with Mr. Duthie and had everything to live for but it wasn't to be.

Mr Duthie left for the Scots College Paris to take up the post of 'Prefect of Studies' from 1761-1766. He died in 1785.

As he left for Paris he must have reflected on the twenty years spent at Scalan, sixteen of which he was master. He held Scalan together through the most trying times of its history and it is thanks to him that Scalan survived. He has a well deserved place in the history of Scalan.

Mr Duthie was succeeded by George Duncan, a former pupil; unfortunately he was only able to stay for six months and was followed by Mr Gray. *See page 14*

Walk from Scalan to Culanduim (Calantium)

About half to three quarters hour one way

Having visited Scalan you may enjoy walking to Culanduim; this is where master Duthrie fled to escape the Hanovarian troops in May 1746. The Hanovarian troops were moving up the Braes of Glenlivet burning Catholic chapels, schools and homes. Scalan was on their list; Master Duthrie escaped to the hills and stood watching the Seminary burn from little Tom. He had ensured that the students and all movable possessions were in safe houses.

In those days the hills were covered in coarse grasses and juniper bushes which provided summer grazing for the sturdy wine coloured, long haired cattle. Those tending the cattle lived in temporary structures erected on the sheiling land. The sheilings were built of stones and turf and repaired each season, some becoming permanent with time. Today one is unable to walk from Scalan to Culanduim as 'the crow flies' due to fences etc. The route I have chosen is not the one Master Duthrie would have taken and will take a little longer.



Leave Scalan and retrace your tracks to the metal gate where you entered the field at the end of the track and go over the stile into the next field. From here looking straight ahead you will see the old lime pits on the rising ground. The limestone was transported to the lime kiln on the left of the track to Scalan and also to one at the Clash of Scalan. Start walking up the hill following the fence line; to your right you will see the remains of the Crofts of Scalan and beyond in the rushy ground is an old peat moss last worked about 25 years ago. Continue up the fence side and cross the next stile, pick your way through the gorse bushes which may be in flower; the bright yellow blooms brighten any day. Keep about 45° to the right. The nearest building you will see is Fuarandearg. Duthrie may have passed here and even stopped to talk. It is one of the oldest dwellings sites in the Scalan area and could date back to the early 18th century. The present building is in a sorry state but about thirty years ago was about habitable. It was lined out with pine boarding, had a fireplace at each end and a sound ladder up to the upper floor which would be the sleeping section. There was no running water inside or electric. Keep above the building and below the small stand of larch up the hill you will see a gate in the hill fence. Negotiate the gate and turn to look down towards the wood. You will see 'The Street'; a line of four fenced ruins built in the 1860's, a fifth ruin near by was probably a byre. Nearer the wood is the red tin roof of Easter Scalan, its owner is a Brae's person who is renovating it. Close to the wood and beyond the Street is Green Bank and another ruin, the former has the gable end collapsing. This area is known as Larryvarry; once a vibrant crafting community and home to memories of the past.



From the gate walk slightly right, uphill, onto the shoulder of Tom Trumper and you can look down onto another abandoned community. The Fannich burn rises here to flow past Culanduim and other deserted crofts to join the Crombie at Nether Clashnoir. The nearest ruin croft you see is not the one Master Duthrie lived in, his was 'a mean dwelling with no fire', a good description of a summer sheiling. Sheep and cattle still graze the land so if you do wish to follow the walk please shut gates and keep dogs under control.

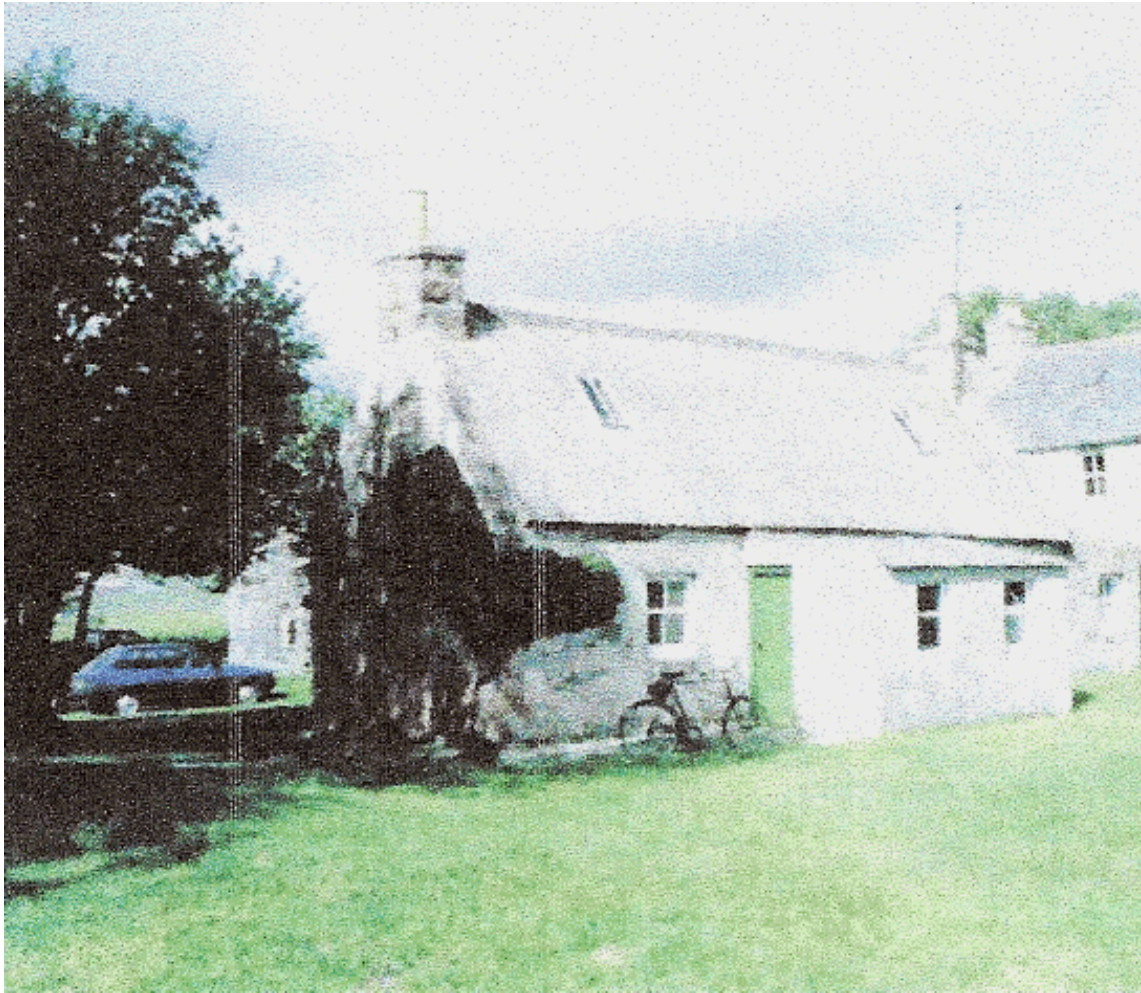


As an alternative route you can go up to the Clash of Scalan, turn right, following the Crown arrow markers, and go up to the stile just above where the grass joins the heather. Cross the stile and also the one on your left on to Tom Trumper, turn right and follow the fence until you reach the gate above Fuarandearg.

Letter from the President

Dear members of the Scalan Association,

You will be pleased to know that the Scalan Association has purchased the cottage adjacent to the old college that was previously the home of Sandy Matheson.



The price was £35000. The building has an A listing in which it is described as an eighteenth century cottage. If this dating is accurate, the actual cottage was part of the college wing in seminary days. What is certain is that it is on the site of the kitchen wing, and so we rejoice that it has been restored to the direct care of the Church.

It was a condition of the sale that we had to take a lease on the surrounding buildings and the surrounding area. The buildings include the old mill, an outhouse that was once a byre (which also has a mill attached to it), and a derelict cottage that just might have been a previous seminary building. The area of ground leased is 2.034 acres and includes the Bishop's Well and the Bishop's Walk. The lease is for fifteen years at the rate of £100 per annum. Even if the lease had not been a condition of sale, it would have been necessary in order to fence the area as cows had caused considerable damage by knocking down our memorial trees, by damaging the mill lade, and churning up the ground in front of the college on the space in which we have our annual Scalan Mass. This area is now fenced, the crown supplying the fencing material and the fencing erected by Mr Gordon McGillivray's work force. The improvement to the ground area is already apparent. The Crown has repaired the gable and slates of the mill house and has promised repairs to the lade bridge. You will be asking what we are going to do with the new acquisition. When possible acquisition was first mooted in Canon Copeland's time, the intention was to provide a house for a caretaker, and this is the proposal that will be put forward for your consideration at the next A.G.M.





The Scalán Association

Invite you to attend

to be held

The Scalán Seminary

on

Tuesday 2nd

12pm onwards

To mark the purchase of the late Scalán Association, and the lease of extensive Seminary and Chapel, from The Crown

Gathering at the Scalán Seminary

Mass, and afterwards for a meal

(In the event of inclement weather the

The Annual General Meeting
be held when the reception



The Crown has suggested that we have a celebration to mark this acquisition, and to celebrate continued co-operation between Crown and Church. Accordingly our Mass at 12noon on Tuesday 2nd June will be a Mass of Thanksgiving and Cardinal O'Brien has agreed to preside and be the Principal Concelebrant while Archbishop Conti has consented to preach. The local Bishop, His Lordship Peter Moran, Bishop Of Aberdeen has assured us that he will be there, and Bishop Joseph Toal of Argyle and the Isles, who is one of our former secretaries, has said that he will do his level best to come to Scalan for this occasion. No doubt other Bishops will manage as well. The Crown is going to provide refreshments in Chapeltown Village Hall after the Mass and the meeting this year will be postponed until 3pm. You are cordially invited to this auspicious occasion and to let Mrs McEwan know if you can manage.

The working committee take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support, and is most grateful to all who have worked hard in the protracted endeavours to achieve this result. We can now say, "Well done! And more power to your elbows!"

May God bless you in all your endeavours,

Yours sincerely

Canon Brian Halloran,

President of the Scalan Association.

Points of Interest

1. **Annual Scalan Mass Sunday 5th July starts at 4.00pm**
2. On March 14th the frogs appeared in large numbers in the Eskemullach pond. The lapwings had already arrived and seemed to enjoy diving and rising despite the wind. Next to herald spring were the curlews with their distinctive call; then came the oyster catchers descending in groups of four to six on the fields. A few days later the redshanks arrived. All this activity and the gorse isn't even in flower on the Scalan track. Two or three days of warm sunshine, a false spring! We are now back to north winds with wintry showers. March came in like a lamb and went out like a lion.
3. The felling of the Carrick's wood has been a drawn out process. I have no idea how much timber has been extracted and transported to the wood chip factory near Inverness but I can say the lorries have chewed up the track into a muddy mess despite quantities of stone being spread to prevent them getting stuck. Good timber for boards etc. is stacked separately and goes elsewhere. I am assured that the track, fences etc. will be made good before the summer.
4. A local farmer has donated thirty rowan trees, stakes and tubes to replace those at Scalan that have died through old age.
5. Miss Mutch has had a birch tree planted at Scalan in memory of Monsignor Copeland. Thank you on behalf of the Scalan Association.
6. Since Father Toal wrote the article on the Scots College Salamanca where he spent many happy years he has been appointed Bishop to Argyll and the Isles and now resides at the bishop's house in Oban. He has always been a great supporter of Scalan and I am sure we will see him at the Annual Mass if time permits. As you know the Scots College Salamanca no longer takes in students but is a retreat. I received a letter from one of the Scalan members who stayed there and found the experience beneficial and very enjoyable.

William Gray

Master May 1759 - Sept 1762

In May Mr. Gray was sent to assist Mr. Duthie at Scalan. He was in his mid fifties, single and a convert. He had worked as a private tutor for most of his life and during that time he attended the Scots college Paris for two years. He entered Scalan as a student and assistant teacher to Mr. Duthie whose health was poor. After a year Mr. Gray returned to private tutoring. In May 1759 at the age of 60 years and still not ordained he returned to Scalan as master.

He was not welcomed by the local community or staff and doubts were expressed concerning his ability to run the college efficiently. Unfortunately these misgivings proved correct and after three years he was replaced by John Geddes, a young priest full of enthusiasm. This proved to be an excellent choice and once again Scalan was put on the right road.

St David of Wales. VIth century.

Lords, brothers and sisters, be happy, and keep your faith and your belief, and do the little things that you have heard and seen me do.

Submitted by Roger Hickley S. Africa

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Are you up to date with your subscriptions? The Scalan Association needs your help.



The two squares visible on the flat ground are not visible with the naked eye. Could these indicate the original Scalan? Comments please.

The Lord will make us prosper

And our earth shall yield its fruit.

Justice shall march before him

And peace shall follow his steps.

Taken from Psalm 84

Copies of photos used may be obtained from the editor with a donation to The Scalan Association. Please state size (up to A4)