

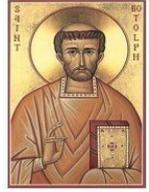


# The Botolphian

Newsletter of

The Society of Saint Botolph

[www.botolph.info](http://www.botolph.info) (hosted by 'Computer-Aid').



The Saint Botolph icon above is copyright © Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, MA and used by permission. All rights reserved.  
Admin: Denis Pepper, 17, Cliffe House, Radnor Cliff, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2TY. Tel: +44 (0)1303 778-778. Email: [dp@botolph.info](mailto:dp@botolph.info)  
President: Revd Timothy L'Estrange, Vicar of St.Gabriel's Church, North Acton.

Issue Number: 109

Now published every other month

1st February 2024

## Highlights this month

- **St Andrews Fife, with editorial notes about the tradition of 'droving' and how it might (or might not) have affected the building of Saint Botolph churches.**

### Editorial

I have been interested for some time in the old droving routes of Britain, and in particular (bearing in mind that drovers were *travellers*) with their potential link to the siting of Saint Botolph Churches.

With that in mind I searched out and bought (second-hand) what proved to be a wonderful book by John Keay entitled *Highland Drove*.<sup>1</sup> This well-written book is light and easy-reading with more than a little humour whilst at the same time being educational in a multitude of directions. It is the story of a drove of thirty highland cattle (MacMoos as we call them down here) from the Island of Skye to the market town of Crieff near Perth – a distance of some 140 miles.

Droving has a long history which came to an abrupt halt in mid C19 with the introduction of railways. 150 years later, in the 1980s, John Keay was struck by a Botolph-like obsession to do it all again – to see how it worked and to examine the pitfalls; the book is the fascinating story of his experiment.

Five millennia earlier the builders of Stonehenge in the southwest of England are said to have feasted on pigs and cattle from Scotland in the far north, but the earliest droving records in Britain date from C14. In C15 Henry V brought a boost to the trade by ordering that a vast quantity of cattle and sheep be delivered to the Cinque Ports

to feed his armies in France, but in truth the beginning of long distance droving's heyday started in C17 - and there is the rub from the Botolphian point of view. It was *too late* to have any influence over Botolph churches, all of which would by then have been well-established for many centuries as a result of catering for two-legged travellers.

Droving on a small scale and over shorter distances would by necessity have been going on since time immemorial,<sup>2</sup> so the famous ancient tracks such as the Fosse, Icknield and Peddars Ways, and the Akeman, Ermine, Watling and Stane Streets would have seen their fair share of droves according to where the nearest cattle market or port might be. In general, for obvious reasons, favoured droveways were much wider than the narrow paths taken by pilgrims, but those pathways were carved out by, and predominantly for, humans, and it was *they* for whom the travellers' churches were built – not (as I now know) for the MacMoos.



Picture courtesy of Marian Havenga of Pexels

<sup>1</sup> John Keay, *Highland Drove*, (London: John Murray Publishers Ltd, 1984) ISBN 0-7195-4105-0.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. before 1189 (in legal terms) but long before that in colloquial terms.

# St Andrews, Fife.

St Andrews previously featured in *The Botolphian Issue 91 of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020*<sup>3</sup> when Covid was in full swing. Because of this I was unable to get out and take my own photographs, but had to rely upon pictures taken by others.

In August 2023 however, Zina and I at last visited Saint Andrews and put the matter right. I was then able to compare and update my virtual impressions with those of reality.

The principal object of my search was the site of Saint Botolph's Chapel as recorded in Item 1039 (Edinburgh, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1471) of the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland (A.D. 1421-1513) where it is written:<sup>4</sup>

*The king, for the safety of his soul, etc., ratified all the gifts and all the possessions made to the Church of St. Andrew by his progenitors, and confirmed the charter of privileges of the said church: viz.*

*First of all, the very place in which the aforesaid church is situated with its appurtenances;*

*the priories of Pettynweme and Portmook, with churches, tithes, lands, etc.;*

***the church of S. Trinity with the vicarage of the same for the use of the prior and canons, with the chapel of S. Botulph and other chapels;***

*the hospital of S. Leonard, together with the lands of Kinnochy, the tithes and annual rents belonging to the city of S. Andrew with the rest thereof.*

At the end of our virtual and unproductive foray into this field in 2020 I had concluded:

“Until more evidence comes to light, we will have to leave it there. To sum up we have three possibilities (for the location of the chapel):

1. The building down by the harbour.
2. A long-lost chapel that was once part of Holy Trinity church.
3. A chapel outside but close to St Andrews - perhaps within the sheep-farming countryside - maybe just a small chapel in a humble hamlet like Hallyburton.”

-0-

<sup>3</sup> Back issues can be found at [www.botolph.info](http://www.botolph.info) (the website is hosted by my son's company *Computer-Aid*).

<sup>4</sup> Translated from the Latin.



## St Andrews (aka Kilrymont)

St Andrews is privileged to have no apostrophe in its name due to its ancient origins. Its even more ancient name was Kilrymont (aka *Kilrimont*, *Kinrymont*, *Cenrimunt*, *Kilrimund* etc). The name is first recorded in 747:

*Mors Tuathalain abbatis Cinrigh Monai.*  
(Death of Tuathalan, abbot of Kinrymont).<sup>5</sup>

I must start as I did in the December 2020 issue by relating the story that links St Andrew's relics in Greece with this part of Scotland:

St Regulus was the man of the early moment for it was he who was somehow pivotal in the foundation of St Andrews. It is difficult to separate fact from legend but the story goes that in A.D. 345 Regulus was a monk (or even the bishop) in the Greek city of Patras where the relics of the apostle St Andrew were kept following his crucifixion there in A.D.60.



<sup>5</sup> <https://fife-placenames.glasgow.ac.uk/placename/?id=2223>. (Retrieved 31 January 2024). For the purposes of this article I have chosen *Kilrymont* as my preferred spelling.

Regulus was told in a dream that Emperor Constantine planned to move the bones to Constantinople and that he should hide some of the relics for safe keeping – he chose a patella, three fingers, a humerus and a tooth. Later in a second dream an angel commanded that he should take these relics as far westwards as he could manage and there build a shrine and dedicate it to St Andrew. On that basis the items should have arrived in Fife in mid C4 but they did not start performing their destined function (i.e. the renaming of Kilrymont to St Andrews) until C12.

We will, for the moment continue with the feature and return to this puzzle later.

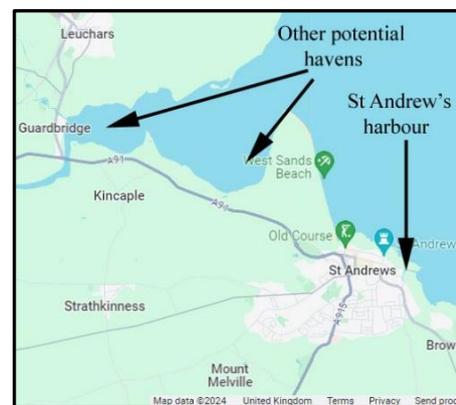
Irrespective of how they arrived, in c.1128<sup>6</sup> Kilrymont's new Bishop Robert built St Rule's Church to house them. The presence of such an important saint raised the prestige of Scotland since (it was reasoned) there was only one other place which professed to house the relics of one of Christ's apostles, and that was at Santiago (St James) of Compostela.<sup>7</sup>

The C12 marketing team nailed the lid shut by renaming the Scottish location 'St Andrews'.



The drying harbour of St Andrews is today a modest affair and it would have probably been little different six centuries ago. In C7 there would have been considerably more depth of water, but there again, there would have been no harbour wall for the protection of beached vessels from northerly or easterly winds. There were, nevertheless, other anchorages to the northeast which would have afforded protection. Between May and September however, most winds would have been from the western quarter when St Andrew's harbour would have been undisturbed. That, at least, is the theory. The fact is that the slipway (almost visible to the seaward side of the outer wall) was built in C17 for the purpose of

landing stone recovered from the ruins of St Andrew's Castle (the structure to the far right of

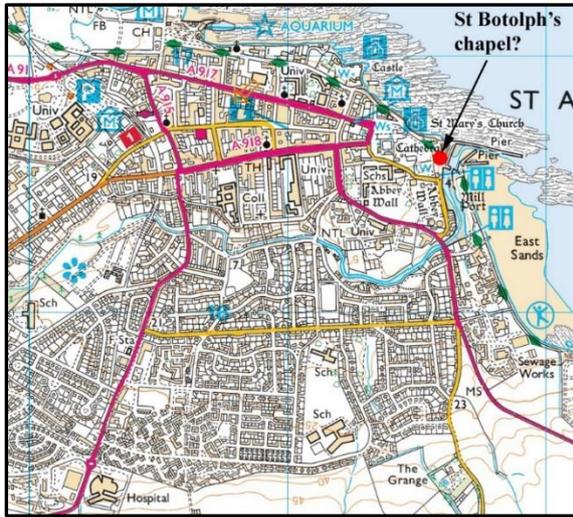


<sup>6</sup> In December 2020 I put c.1070 as the date of this event, but it seems that all the evidence points to 1128.

<sup>7</sup> We are told in the literature that this was the rationale. In fact the relics only represented a tiny part of St

Andrew's skeleton of which the scattered remainder are to this day flaunted in Patras, Italy, Warsaw, Istanbul and even Edinburgh.

the picture) for recycling in the form of the harbour walls we see today. The slipway was also used for landing stone from a nearby quarry. Following the sky-line in the large picture above: in the centre stands St Rule's Tower, and to the right of that is a smaller thinner tower which marks the *western* end of the cathedral ruins and to the right of that are the twin towers which mark the *eastern* end.



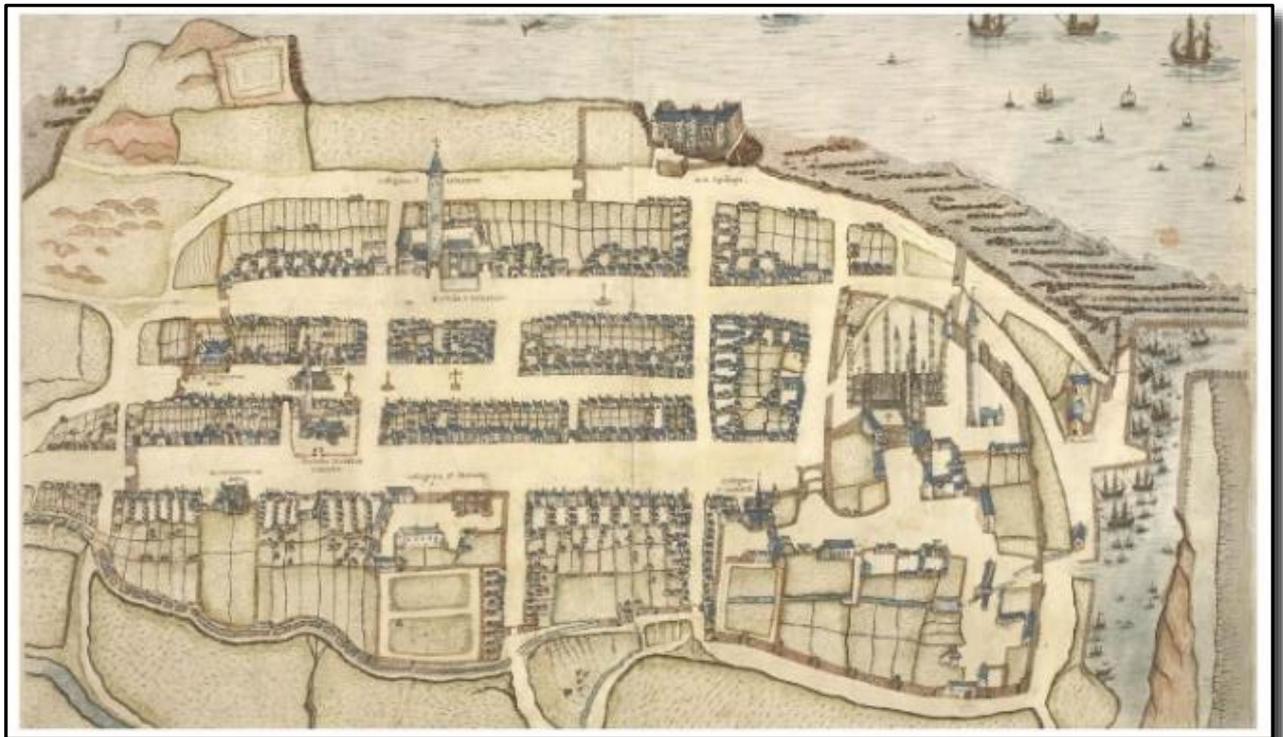
My aim was to discover where St Botolph's Chapel would have stood. The candidates at this point are (i) the small white building at the far left of the aforementioned large picture, (ii) another building hidden behind the properties that line the

quayside, and (iii) the foundations of a headland church that would have stood just to the right of the twin towers.



Reverting momentarily to the building of the harbour: the technique used consisted of first constructing a wooden pier, and then filling it with boulders. Sadly the first recorded pier of that ilk was destroyed by a storm in December 1655, whereupon a constant cycle of rebuilding and destruction occurred on a regular basis until today's 268.5 metre pier of a more modern design was produced in 1900.

Looking at the picture above, the topmost part of the blackened part of the stonework represents the average high-water mark.



We are fortunate to have this map of St Andrews, drawn by John Geddy in 1580.



In the picture detail above, next to an optimistic harbourful of commercial craft, we see, ringed, the small white building mentioned earlier. In previous writings on this subject I dismissed the possibility of this being what I was looking for on the basis that it is aligned North-South rather than the requisite West-East. Today this is a Fishermen's store, but it was previously known as Shore Mill, and was built in early C16 by order of the Archbishop. If it had been turned by 90 degrees the site would have been ideal as a Saint Botolph's Chapel however, so we must wonder, in passing, whether the mill could have been built on ancient Botolphian foundations? The wall against which it (nearly) abuts dates from C14.



Above we see the southern end of Shore Mill. To its west is a small building which is today the harbourmaster's office, and to the left of that is a building with a cross which looks a little more hopeful. Neither of these feature on John Geddy's map however – suggesting they are both modern constructions, and it is only the harbour master's

building which is 'correctly' oriented so it seems that we must dismiss them all.

Looking back to the picture detail, there is another building (towards the top of the frame) which is aligned West-East, and this is the one I described earlier as being 'another building hidden behind the properties that line the quayside'.

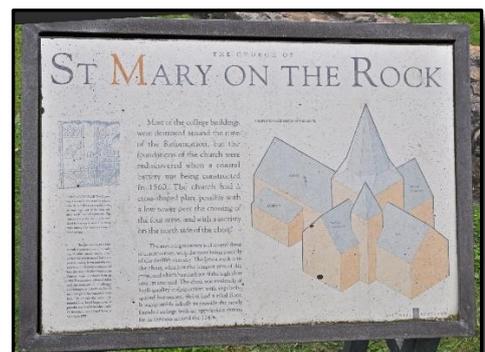


It is shown, ringed, above and, if the foundations were old enough, would qualify for interest, but two items further west fit the bill rather better. First a single stone wall with buttresses to its east, and then the foundations of a ruined church. All are 'outside the city walls' in common with many other St Botolph's churches, and all are on a prominent headland visible from the sea.

### Church of St Mary on the Rock



The foundations belonged to the ruined church known as 'St Mary-on-the-Rock'.



The faded noticeboard concedes that there *might have been an earlier church on this site*,<sup>8</sup> but assures us that the great majority of foundations we look at now date from C12. It is suggested that the church was built for the *Culdees* (see explanation below). These foundations did not come to light until 1860 so the fact that they do not appear in John Geddy's map of 1580 is unsurprising.

There are a considerable number of important buildings on this headland so here we address the rest of them:

### Church and Tower of St Rule (aka St Regulus)

The 108ft (33 m) high tower and the ruined choir of this church lie to the southeast of the cathedral. Attached to the choir there was once a sanctuary, but no signs of that are now visible above ground. The church's nave is similarly lost to sight. The church is said to have been founded by Bishop Robert in **1127** to house St Andrew's relics ... although Canmore<sup>9</sup> suggests it was 'probably erected towards the end of C11'.

### Church of Holy Trinity, Kilrymont

The Church of Saint Trinity (or Holy Trinity Church as it is known today) was founded in **1112** when it lay close to the southeast corner of Saint Andrew's Cathedral; it was not dedicated until 1234 and in 1412 it moved to South Street. St Andrews University was also founded in 1412 its designated purpose being to educate young men for the Christian ministry.

### Cathedral of St Andrew

This was an Augustinian foundation, the community having first been brought to the Church of St Rule when that tower-church was founded.



The cathedral itself was founded in **1160** and was one of the longest churches ever built in Britain; it had an internal west-east dimension of 109 m.

<sup>8</sup> This theory is supported by the presence of several C9 and C10 cross slabs in the area.

The west end was rebuilt c.1275. Its demise came when it fell foul of the Scottish Reformation in 1560 after which it fell into ruins, much of its masonry being recycled.

-0-

Let us remind ourselves of the brief relating to the target of our search: the words of the register were written in **1471**:

*The king, for the safety of his soul, etc., ratified all the gifts and all the possessions made to the Church of St. Andrew (including):*

*... the church of S. Trinity with the vicarage of the same for the use of the prior and canons, with the chapel of S. Botolph and other chapels.*



The *old* Holy Trinity Church (marked in the picture above by the left end of the arrow) had been within 100 metres of St Mary on the Rock, so if (as I had hoped) its predecessor was a St Botolph's Chapel it might well have been a later dependency of Holy Trinity.

By 1471 however (the time of writing of the register) St Mary on the Rock was firmly part of the collegiate church of the Culdees.

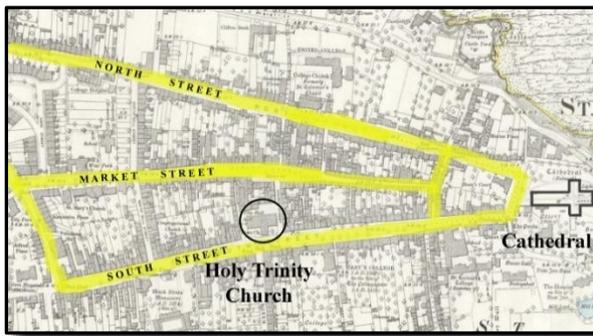
This group incidentally have no connection with the similar-sounding Chaldeans from *Ur of the Chaldees* of Biblical fame. On the contrary, they are distinctly Celtic, and were originally known as the *Céilí Dé* which translates from the Irish Gaelic to 'Spouses of God'. Their faith dates from as long ago as C8 if you read some authorities, or even C2 if you read others. They are first recorded in Ireland as anchorites – i.e. hermit-like people who lived a solitary life devoting themselves to God. Later they re-invented themselves as secular clergy following a canonical rule and tended to attach themselves to cathedrals (like St Andrews) or to collegiate churches. They were more prevalent in Scotland than elsewhere although they also featured prominently in Ireland and in York.

### Church of Holy Trinity, South Street

From soon after C12 the focal point of St Andrews' two main streets have been the cathedral - and the point of main interest there was of course the shrine containing the relics of St

<sup>9</sup> <https://canmore.org.uk/event/1016903>. (Retrieved 31 January 2024).

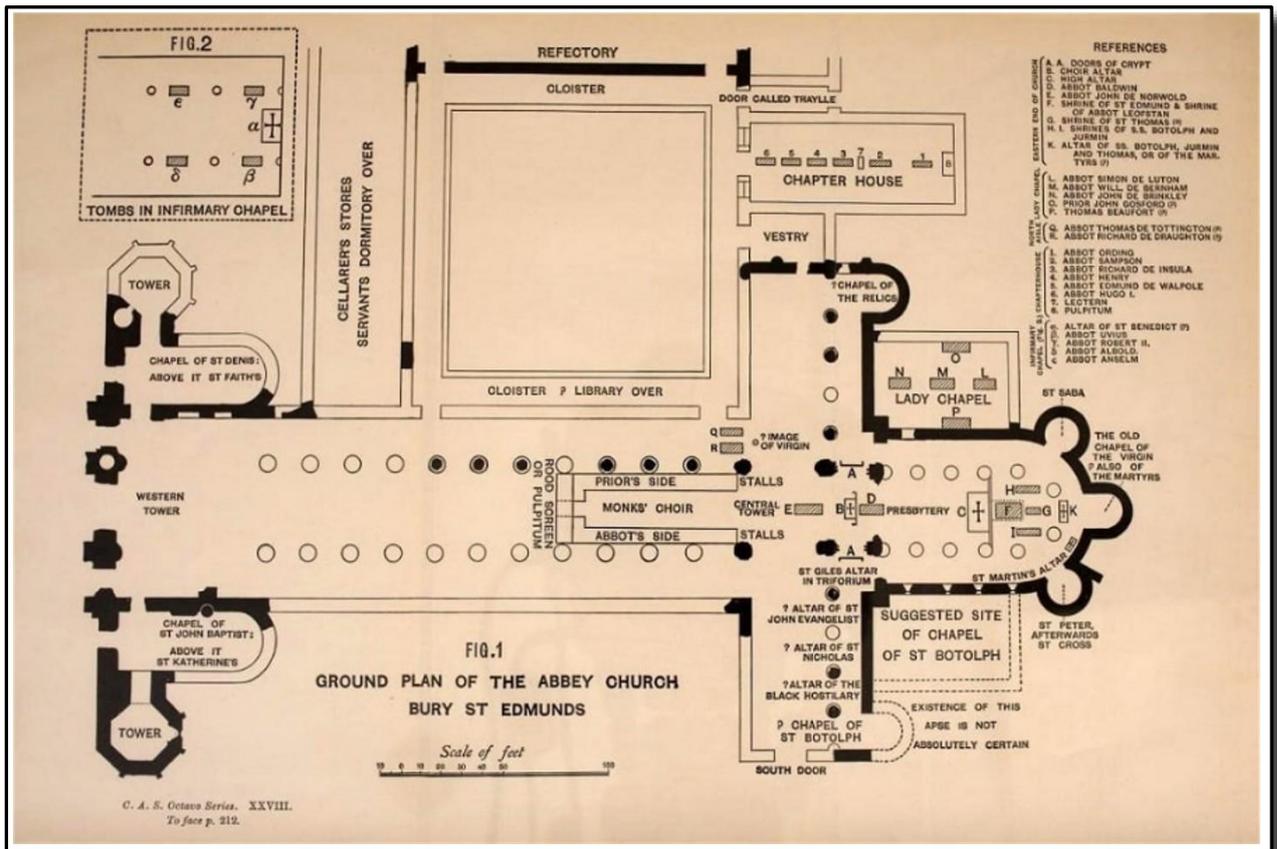
Andrew. The plan was that pilgrims would follow a circular route (perhaps North Street 'in' and South Street 'out' or *vice versa*) leaving the booths and stalls of Market Street undisturbed.



In 1412 the decision that had been taken some years earlier, namely to move Holy Trinity Church into the town, was enacted.

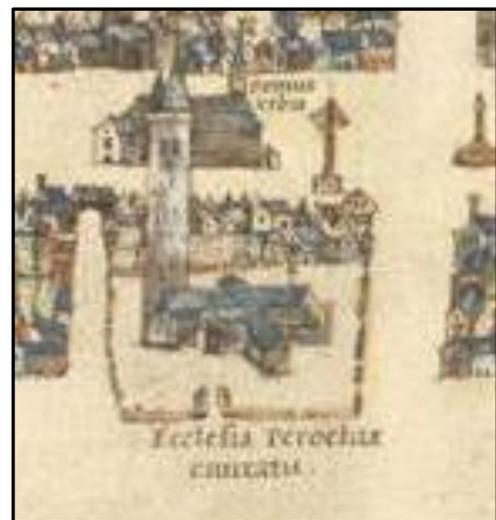
It is not recorded why such a decision would have been made, but one assumes that it was a combination of de-cluttering the cathedral area, and providing a second option where pilgrims could spend their money and satisfy their spiritual needs.

Sadly no groundplan or description of the 1412 church has survived. We might suspect however, that it would have been something like the abbey church of Bury St Edmunds (below) where there was a multitude of spaces filled by altars and chapels dedicated to individual saints.



Each of the saints at Holy Trinity Church would be represented by one or more small bony relics all of which would have been translated from the original church near the cathedral.

In view of his position as patron saint of travellers Saint Botolph's Chapel would have been one of the most important in the church since 'travel' was the essence of pilgrimage, and 'danger' was an ever-present feature of travel. By definition pilgrims carried money or goods to use as votive offerings, and there were plenty of footpads who would like to relieve the pilgrims of the burden of carrying them. We see the South Street Church in the picture detail shown on the right but I am intrigued to know in which direction the authorities decided the flow of traffic should go.



Would the pilgrims have been encouraged to visit Saint Botolph's Chapel on the inward leg, to give thanks for their safe arrival, or would the preference be to make their veneration on the outward leg to pray for a safe onward journey?

My suspicion is that if the *cathedral* authorities had control of the arrangements they might have preferred their visitors to go straight to the shrine of St Andrew while they still had money to spare. They could then visit the chapels in Holy Trinity Church afterwards. On the other hand if, as the *town kirk*, the *church* authorities had greater sway, the favoured direction would be the reverse.

It is also a matter of interest to me to consider how much money the pilgrims had to spend. Were they generally rich or did they have limited means? Would they offer a large amount of money at Saint Andrew's shrine, but a smaller amount at the shrines of the lesser saints ... or would they offer the same amount at each? To what extent were they on a 'Grand Tour' to see the sights, and to what extent were they homing in on Saint Andrew in the hope of a miraculous cure?

This of course was a difficult period for the reputation of our saint because the spectre of Saint Christopher was rapidly approaching and itching for a takeover. But not yet. The register assures us that in 1471 the cult of Saint Botolph was still alive and well in St Andrews.

It is of note that the anonymous registrar writes:

*... the church of S. Trinity ... with the chapel of S. Botulph and other chapels.*

... giving due reverence to our saint, but being somewhat dismissive of the other resident relics. As we discussed in connection with St Botolph's shrine in Westminster Abbey,<sup>10</sup> his popularity was maintained until closer to 1500 soon after which the Reformation delivered the *coup de grâce* to the concept that holy intercession should not take place through the saints, but directly with God.

### **John Knox**

We cannot leave this subject without noting that it was in Holy Trinity Church in South Street on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1559 that Knox as the main forerunner of the Scottish Reformation preached a sermon which was so inflammatory that it led directly to the ruination of the city's once-beautiful and proud cathedral. As a lifelong member of the Church of England I cannot but support the principles of the Reformation, but as an historian I find myself constantly deploring the vandalism of books and buildings that occurred as a result. I guess I am not alone in this.

---

<sup>10</sup> *The Botolphian*, Issue number 106, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

### **Conclusion**

I believe that we have found the location of Saint Botolph's Chapel at St Andrews and that the evidence fits so snugly with the conclusion that we can forget the other possibilities - with the proviso that this sort of research is not an exact science, and new evidence might yet arise to make us think again.

### **Relevant dates**

**747** The Annals of Tigernach record the presence of a church on what is now the St Andrews site, and Abbot Tuathalan is recorded as having died there in that same year.

**1112 St Trinity Church Kilrymont** founded by Bishop Turgot as the first parish church.<sup>11</sup> It was in full use by 1147.

**c.1128 St Regulus Church and tower** built by Robert, the first prior of Scone (the flagship Augustinian priory built by Alexander I of Scotland) and subsequent Bishop of St Andrews from c.1127.

**1144 Church of St Mary on the Rock** founded.

**1160 St Andrews Cathedral** founded.

**1412 Holy Trinity Church** South Street founded.

**1471** The date on which the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland records the existence of 'the chapel of S. Botulph'.

### **Conjecture regarding the journey of the relics from Patras.**

What seems to me a more plausible theory than that of Regulus' bringing the relics directly to the shores of Fife, relates to Abbot/Bishop Acca (c.660-740) of St Andrew's Abbey Hexham. Acca was a great friend of the controversial Bishop Wilfrid, and the two of them travelled widely together; both were avid collectors of relics and Rome was their regular stomping ground. Benedict Biscop (c.628-690) was a third member of the trio and he too might have been involved in this project.

We read that Regulus was told to head west. If he did not pursue much of the journey by sea it is likely that he would have ended up either in Rome or somewhere on the same Via Francigena route that was followed by Acca and Wilfrid. If Regulus had popped up in Rome with relics that should have been heading for Constantinople, questions might have been asked, so he would have needed to be discreet about the matter. There is some doubt about whether Regulus was factual or legendary, but 250 years after his death the relic collectors of Hexham would have looked for some provenance for their clandestine

<sup>11</sup> <https://canmore.org.uk/site/34296/st-andrews-church-of-the-holy-trinity-of-kilrimund#details> (Retrieved 31 January 2024).

purchases so it might be that an invention by the vendors was the source of the Regulus legend; alternatively perhaps Regulus was indeed a real person.



Either way it seems likely that the relics would have arrived in the Italy area in late C4 and have been purchased by the Hexham gang in C7. Wilfrid was notably wealthy to the extent that money was no object, but even so he would probably have driven a hard deal with the vendors.

I believe that this is a plausible concept of how the relics might have ended up close to Kilrymont. Sadly Hexham Abbey was razed to the ground by the Vikings in 875, but it is likely that ‘portable property’ (such as a few small relics) would have been secreted away. The abbey site was brought under the Bishopric of Durham in 995 so we might wonder whether the next home of St Andrew’s relics was Durham Priory?

In 1087 Turgot (1050-1115) was prior of St Cuthbert’s monastery at Durham, but by 1112 he had been elected as bishop and it was he who founded Saint Trinity Church in Kilrymont. Within a couple of years Hexham Abbey was rebuilt as an Augustinian priory. Indeed the Augustinians were at that time ubiquitous in this area,<sup>12</sup> and their promotion was driven by King Alexander I of Scotland through a former Augustinian canon from the priory at Nostell in Yorkshire by the name of Robert. In c.1114 Alexander put Robert in charge of his flagship Augustinian priory at Scone, just north of Perth, and the new house was dedicated by none other than Turgot, Bishop of Kilrymont.

<sup>12</sup> Readers might recall that the first Augustinian house in England was opened at St Botolph’s Abbey Colchester in 1096.

St Trinity Church proved to be rather slow in getting off the ground but in c.1128 the newly consecrated Bishop Robert founded the St Regulus church and tower which became the repository for St Andrew’s relics and justified the renaming of Kilrymont to St Andrews.

#### REGULAR END-NOTES

If this is your first *Botolphian* and you have acquired it by circuitous means but would like to receive an email copy each month then just send an email to [dp@botolph.info](mailto:dp@botolph.info) saying 'YES PLEASE'. If you wish to UNsubscribe then send the message 'NO THANKS.'

If you wish to purchase any of the books of the Botolph Trilogy please use the same email address.

You will frequently see the 'twin' towns of *Boston* mentioned in these newsletters, - one in Lincolnshire and the other in Massachusetts USA. The relevance to the Society is that the name 'Boston' is said to be a contraction of '*Botolph's Town*.'

#### Types of Botolph Church sites: -

The list of classifications I use has been subject to constant revision over the past ten years. The current version, first revised in December 2020, is as follows:

1. A church on a site which might have been founded directly by St Botolph during his life or by his acolytes soon after his death.
  2. A church the original of which is thought to have been the product of Danish landowners (c.878-890, c.1016-1035).
  3. A church originating from and as a result of Monastic Revival (c. 950 - 1016).
  4. A church which, even if it had a humble predecessor on the same site, mainly blossomed as a result of opulence gained from the wool trade (c. 1150-1450).
  5. A church lying on or close to one of the major ancient trackways, rivers, Roman roads or city gates, the proximity of which merits the suspicion that a major aspect of the function of the church has for a long while been closely linked with long-distance travel.
  6. A church lying on or close to a pilgrimage route. Churches roles have always needed to be flexible. The **Type 6** classification takes into account the increased influence of pilgrimage that occurred from late C12.
- \* A star is added to the 'Type' when the church lies on a county border.

#### Changing functionality.

One church will often have fulfilled many roles during its lifetime so a 'type' will often be transient and need to be defined by dates.

#### Typical Characteristics of early St Botolph Churches.

1. Nearly all are in the eastern half of England
2. Many lie on what today are county borders.
3. Most have Saxon foundations.
4. Many lie within 3 miles of a Roman road or well-used waterway.
5. Most are situated close to the bottom of an escarpment but well clear of water levels.
6. Many are strategically placed in areas which represent the beginnings, middles and ends of long journeys.

#### Copyright

All rights of 'The Botolphian' newsletters are reserved to Denis Pepper and no items may be copied reprinted or reproduced for commercial purposes without written permission. Readers are however encouraged to copy and transmit the newsletter as long as this is for purely personal use. Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013. (Last revision February 2023).