Against the Tide: The Valor of Margaret Wilson

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Source
(The book was written in 1684, but remained unpublished until much later.)

Most Helpful Sources
Contains a lengthy introduction concerning the patriotic interest women showed during this time period. The two Margarets are among the twenty-five women profiled with the inclusion of some of the folklore that has sprung up concerning them. The Appendix includes an explanation for the “Sense in which the Covenanters refused to say ‘God save the King.’”

Besides the historical information this treatise has some comments about his personal appearance. (Photocopy reprint, Still Waters Revival Books. Publisher is illegible.)


Nimmo, James. *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*. Written to help him remember the Lord’s way of dealing with and His kindness towards him. 1654-1709. Edited from the original manuscript with introduction and noted by W. G. Scott-Moncrieff. Edinburgh: University Press, 1889.
Lengthy introduction was informative. The peculiar and very erratic spelling and the abundance of contractions, characteristic of the seventeenth century, make this difficult reading. I attempted to read through page 75 and the death of Charles II. It was
a familiar tale of the persecution of the devout Covenanters.


Renwick, James. *The Testimony of Some Persecuted Presbyterian Ministers of the Gospel unto the Covenanted Reformation of the Church of Scotland.* The message was given to the ministers at Edinburgh by James Renwick, 17th January 1688. Renwick’s plea for keeping the National Covenant and preaching the Gospel in the field meetings shows him to be highly educated and able to synthesize his knowledge of scripture and the current squabble with King Charles over who is head of the kirk..

Simpson, Rev. Robert, of Sanquhar. *Traditions of the Covenanters: or, Gleanings among the Mountains.* Edinburgh: Gall and Inglis, 1867. (Earliest edition was published in 1841.) Simpson lived 1795-1867. Excellent background for understanding the vehemence with which the Covenanters were persecuted as shown by the deaths of young and old who were willing to die for what they believed was right in God’s eyes. Helpful illustrations.

Wodrow, Robert. *The History of the Suffering of the Church of Scotland: From the Restoration to the Revolution.* Vol. IV. Glasgow: Blackie, Fullarton & Company, 1830. Background on Wilson family, good summary of Margaret’s persecution during “the killing years” and explanation of how her parents suffered because of her actions.


**Other Helpful Sources**


Best, Nicholas. *The Kings and Queens of Scotland.* Portraits from the National Galleries of
Brief histories and drawings of the kings and queens.

Novel of the several generations of one Covenanting family during the time of Margaret Wilson. Good picture of daily living.

Includes a clear presentation of Lowland farming by tenant farmers like the Wilsons.

Intriguing geographic details of the area and lots of sketches.

Brief summary of the Wigtown martyrs and attacks against the veracity of the account.


Good for background information. Here’s where I learned a good day’s ride was thirty to forty miles, but it was considered possible to ride more than fifty miles in an emergency.

Volume II covers the time frame from 1650-1690. Big book with fine print, but easy-to-follow because topics are written in the wide margins.

My chief source for information on James Renwick.

Lippincott, Peter, ed. Psalm Singing of the Covenanters. City, publisher and date aren’t listed. It appears to have been published in 1977 by the Associate Presbyterian Church.
Eighteen essays on Covenanter history, old and recent.

A fun book—about family life and death, luck, work, water, plants and animals.

Fifty readable stories beginning with the early martyrs and a helpful bibliography.


McFeeters, J. C. *Sketchers of the Covenanters.* Philadelphia: Second Church of the Covenanters, 1913. Has general information that is intriguing. I got a sense of the weather and climate and a look into the spiritual feelings of the covenanters, but there are inaccuracies in the text and the dramatic style makes the writing suspect.


Orr, Brian J. *As God is my witness: The Presbyterian Kirk, the Covenanters & the Ulster Scots.* Heritage Books, 2002. Quite readable account of the major problems, battles and persecuted Covenanters.


