

ART. X.—*Notices of certain remarkable Fortified Churches existing in Cumberland.** By JOHN A. CORY, Esq., Carlisle.

ON a survey of the churches in the border Counties, though we cannot commend them to the notice of the antiquary as examples of architectural beauty, for in no part of England, possibly, are the rural churches so devoid of ornament, yet these comparatively simple structures forcibly tell a tale of the state of the country in former times; and, if historical evidences had perished, these buildings might suffice to give the archæologist no slight insight into the social condition of the locality in olden days. Their distance apart from each other tells of a scanty population; the deficiency of architectural decoration shews that the inhabitants of the district were otherwise engaged than in peaceful occupations; whilst the traces of continual repairs in the fabric are evidently not to be attributed to the desire shewn in the churches of many Southern counties, to make good buildings better, but they resulted from the necessity occasioned by the partial destruction of churches through hostile aggressions. In many instances, it may be said that the church had been erected scarcely less for the safety of the body, than for the benefit of the soul.

As the peculiarities, to which I have alluded, are very indicative of the former unsettled state of the country, I have selected as the subject of the present observations three churches in Cumberland, which I think worthy of notice on this account; for in these buildings the defensive or warlike character is strongly marked. These may be

* Communicated to the Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, at Carlisle, July, 1859, and reprinted from the Transactions in connection with the visit of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society to Great Salkeld Church, in June, 1874, under the guidance of Mr. Cory, and the Rev. T. Lees.

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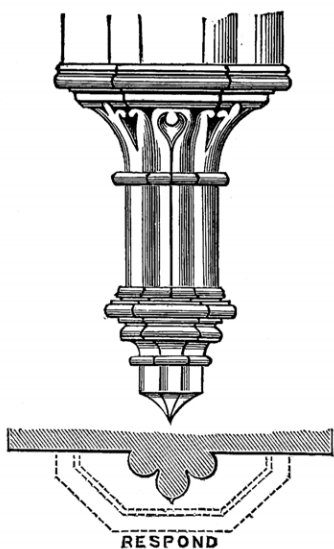
already known to some members of the Institute through the concise notices and the ground-plans given by Messrs. Lysons, in their history of Cumberland;* yet these remarkable specimens of ecclesiastical architecture appear to claim more careful and minute consideration than they have, as I believe, hitherto received.

The first of the border churches to which I would invite the attention of the archæologist, is that of Burgh-on-the-Sands, situated on the southern shore of the Solway. It was at that place, it will be remembered, that Edward 1. died, on July 7, 1307, in the midst of his preparation for a campaign against the Bruce.† The church stands in the south-eastern angle of one of the stations on the line of the Roman Wall, supposed by some antiquaries to be the *Gabrosentum*, by others, the *Axelodunum*, of Antonine's Itinerary. The earliest portion of the building is of late Norman date, and the remains of a round-arched doorway of that period exist on the north side of the north aisle of the church, but not in its original situation. The church was almost, if not wholly, re-built in the thirteenth century; and the fabric presents some features which shew that defence was not at that time the only object considered by the builders. Among them may be cited the details of the aisle, such as the respond figured in our illustrations; windows, however, constructed at a height of eight feet above the ground, suffice to remind us that security was not altogether neglected. At a later period, the tower was erected at the west end of the church, the main object being evidently for purposes of protection. Its walls measure from six to seven feet in thickness. At the time probably of the building of this tower, a new door, of small dimensions, was opened at the west end of the north aisle; it was so placed as to be commanded by a loop-hole in the north side of the

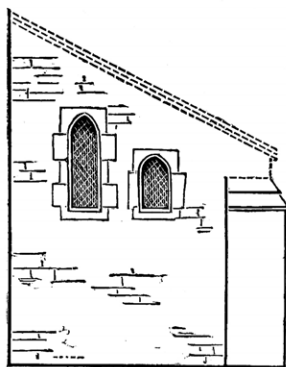
* Historical Account of the County of Cumberland, *Magna Britannia*, vol. iv. p. cxcī.

† See the circumstantial details regarding the last days of Edward I., given in Nic. Trivet's *Annales*, edit. Hist. Soc. p. 413; and Arch. Journ., vol. xiv. p. 269.

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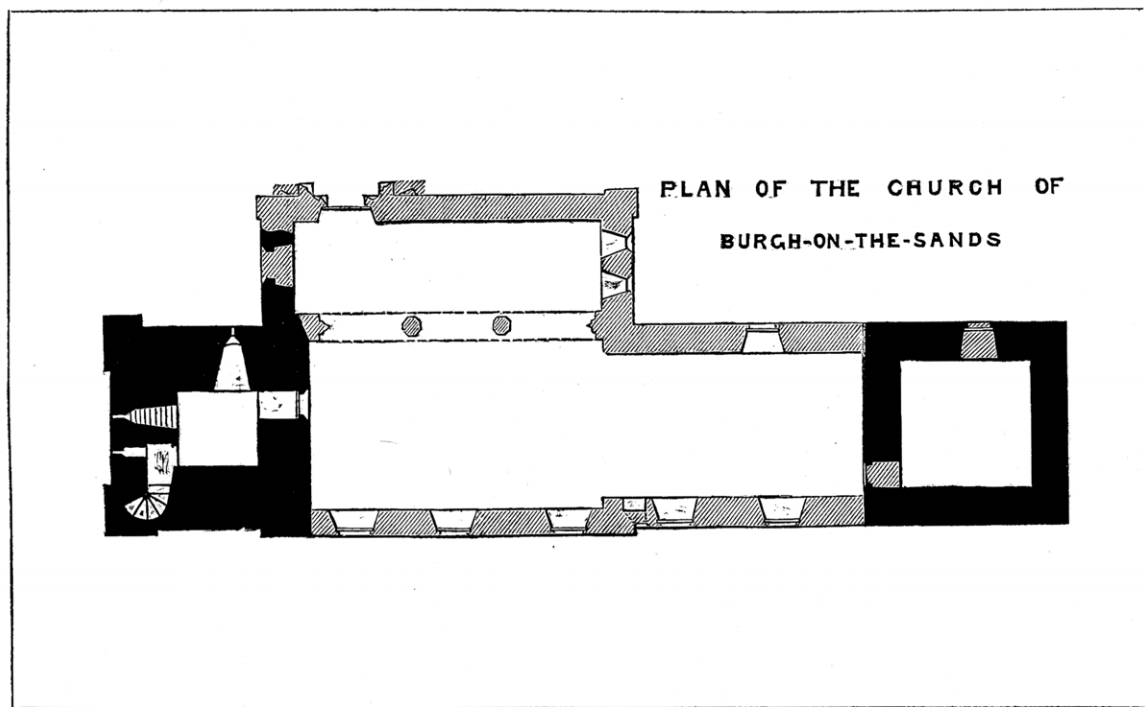


BURGH ON THE SANDS



EAST END OF AISLE

tower, at the end of a recess in the wall, in the ground-floor chamber, as shewn in the plan. The larger doorway, before mentioned, was doubtless at that time built up. Instead of the large arch opening into the tower from the nave, as usually found in churches in other localities, a small doorway gave access to the vaulted chamber on the ground floor of this fortress-tower. This chamber measures about 9 ft. by 8 ft., and the entrance was strongly guarded by a ponderous iron door, 6 ft. 8 in. in height, with two massive bolts, and constructed of thick bars crossing each other, and boarded over with oak planks. The wooden covering has become decayed, or has been destroyed, but the strong iron skeleton of the door would still defy any ordinary efforts to force a passage; whilst the great thickness of the walls would long delay any attempt to gain ingress in any other quarter. The ground-floor chamber being vaulted would be secure against fire, and, in the event of the door being forced and the lower story carried, the newel-staircase could still be strongly barricaded; thus as
it



it would only admit of one person ascending at a time, a stout resistance could be made, whilst the bells would be rung to give an alarm and call to the rescue any succour that might be at hand. This stone staircase at the south-west angle of the tower leads to the upper chamber, which measures about 10 ft. 9 in. by 11 ft. 7 in.; on the east side of this is an opening commanding the interior of the church, and on the south and west sides are small narrow lights. Lysons states the opinion that this tower was probably built in the reign of Edward I.,* but it may be of rather later date.

At the east end of the church, as shewn in the ground-plan, another square structure of considerable strength was built, opening by a small doorway into the church; this may possibly have been a dwelling-place for the vicar. Its walls are rather thicker than those of the church. There is an entrance on the north side of this building, which is entirely modernised, if not of recent construction. The unusual addition of such a building at the east end of a church has not been noticed by Messrs. Lysons.†

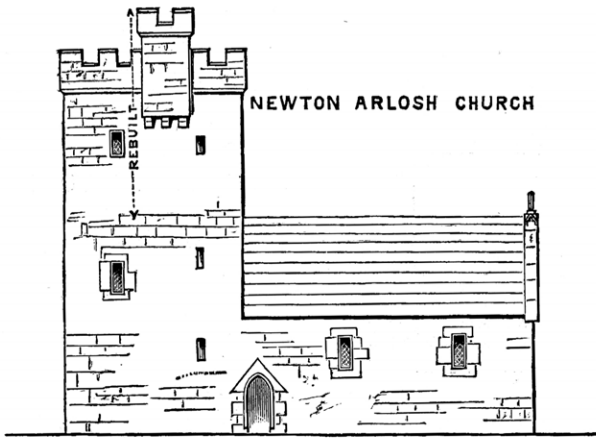
The next church to which I would invite attention is that of Newton-Arlosh, on the coast of Cumberland, a few miles to the west of Burgh, and in the parish of Holme-Cultram. This curious example is of special interest, because the date of its construction has been ascertained. The abbot of Holme had obtained, in 1301,|| a grant from the bishop for building a church at Skinburness, at that period a place of consequence as a depositary for supplies

* History of Cumberland, Introduction, p. cxcii.

† It is stated by Messrs. Lysons, in the History of Cumberland, p. cxc. note, that the church of Annan, in Scotland, on the opposite side of the Solway, appears to have been as strongly fortified as that of Burgh. Other examples are doubtless not wanting on either side of the border, which would repay the investigations of the architectural antiquary. Many of the low square embattled towers of the old churches in Northumberland present, as Mr. Parker has observed, evidence of having been inhabited. That of Ancroft, in particular, which is called in an old record the house of the Curate. Domestic Architecture in England, vol. ii. p. 190.

|| Nicholson and Burn, vol. ii. p. 177.

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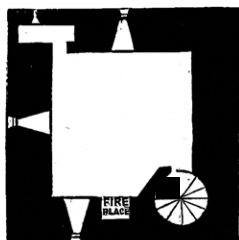
SOUTH ELEVATION.

for the forces engaged against the Scots. Shortly⁷⁷ afterwards, however, the town was destroyed by the inroads of the sea; and in 1309, John de Halaughton or Halton, bishop of Carlisle, granted licence to the abbot to build a church or chapel within the territory of Arlosh, which, subsequently to the removal of the town thither, received the name of Newton, which it still bears. In consequence of the frequent hostile invasions and depredations of the Scots, to which special attention is made in the bishop's charter,* the church then built was so constructed as to appear more like a fortress than an ecclesiastical structure. The doorway is only 2 ft. 7 in. wide; all the windows are more than seven feet from the ground, and not one, even at the east end of the church, measures more than 1 ft. in width, and 3 ft. 4 in. in height. The chamber on the ground floor is vaulted in the same manner as that at Burgh; it measures about 13 ft. square; and it probably had a similarly defensive door, but the lower part of the wall towards the body of the church has been pulled down and the steps altered, so that the original arrangement is not clearly

* Monast. Angl. Caley's edition, vol. v. p. 595.

seen.

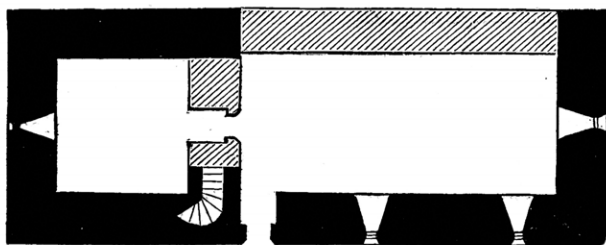
seen. A single small aperture, 18 in. high and 9 in. wide, is formed on the west side. The first floor is nearly of the same dimensions, with three narrow oilets on the north,



UPPER PLAN

NEWTON ARLOSH

CHURCH

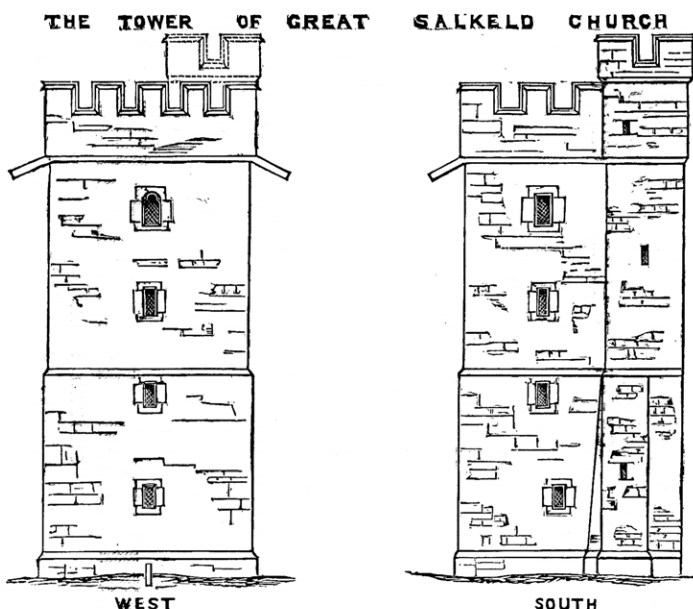


GROUND PLAN

south, and west sides, and it has the unusual feature of a fire-place, which will be noticed likewise in another example to be described hereafter. There appears in Lysons' plans to have been a small chamber in the thickness of the wall, probably a privy, with a drain possibly, as in the Border pele towers, passing down to the base of the building. There was a second story, resembling the last in dimensions and arrangements, with the exception that there was no fireplace. The upper part of the tower, however, has been rebuilt some years ago, when the church was enlarged; the whole building had been allowed to go to ruin, as it was found by Messrs. Lysons, and is represented in the section and south-west view of the church given in their History, in 1815.*

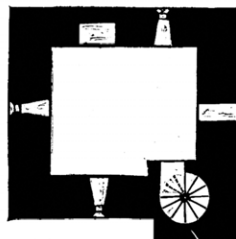
* Hist. of Cumberland, *ut supra* p. cxci.

A third, and very interesting, example, is in the church of Great Salkeld, about six miles north-east of Penrith, and at a greater distance from the Scottish border than the other churches which I have described, but not sufficiently remote to have been secure from hostile invasions. In this instance the tower of defence has been added to a

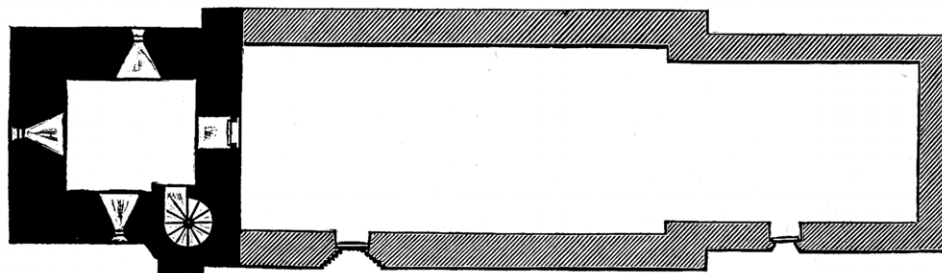


church of Norman date; the south doorway is elaborately ornamented in the style of that period, having a semi-circular head, with recurved mouldings, and three shafts in each of the jambs; yet the entrance, like that at Newton-Arlosh, is only 2 ft. 7 in. in width. The elevation of one side of the tower is given with this paper; there are five floors; the basement is vaulted, and received light by a diminutive aperture just above the level of the ground on the west side. The ground floor is also vaulted, and has a small door from the church formed of a grating of iron bars and oak planks of great strength, like that at Burgh,

GREAT SALKELD CHURCH



UPPER PLAN



GROUND PLAN

Burgh, before described. In the south-east angle there is a newel staircase, giving access to the basement beneath, and to the three chambers above, which had floors of timber. In the chamber on the first floor, as will be seen in the ground plan, there are three small apertures, and also a fireplace, as at Newton-Arlosh. An incised sepulchral slab,* placed sideways, forms the lintel of the fireplace. It is a memorial of some interest, and has been figured in Messrs. Lysons' work. It bears a cross flory of peculiar design; the shaft of the cross rests on a gradated base; on one side of it is a sword, with a belt and buckle, on the other side appears a hunting horn, appended to a baldric. The inscription has not been deciphered, but enough remains to suggest that the person commemorated may have been a forester or official of the royal forest of Inglewood, in immediate proximity to which the parish of Great Salkeld is situated. The following letters may be distinctly perceived . . . OMOBV E INGELVOD There are several other sepulchral slabs of various dates, and not devoid of interest, built into the walls of the tower.† This remarkable structure was, as has been shewn, well adapted to defend the peaceful inhabitants of a rural village in a district which suffered so severely from predatory and hostile raids.

The manor, or honour, of Penrith, with certain other manors, including Great Salkeld, Castle Sowerby, &c., had been assigned to Alexander, king of Scots, in 1237, but in the quarrel between Edward I. and Baliol they were seized, and reverted to the crown. This locality suffered greatly at various times from the invasions of the Scots, on account

*Hist. of Cumberland, p. cxcv. The date of this sepulchral slab may be as early as the thirteenth century. Inglewood Forest abounded in deer at that period. According to the Chronical of Lanercost, Edward I., during a few days hunting in Inglewood, killed no less than 200 bucks.

† On the south side of the chancel there is a stone effigy, not mentioned by Messrs. Lysons. It represents a priest in the mass vestments, rudely sculptured on a slab, on the chamfered margin of which is inscribed THOMAS DE CALDEBECK ARCHIDIACONVS KARL. Thomas de Caldebeck occurs as Archdeacon of Carlisle in 1318. Le Neve's Fasti, edit. by Hardy, voll. iii.

of

of the King of Scotland's claim to these manors. In 1354 Penrith was burnt, and Salkeld and Sowerby were laid waste; in 1380 also another fatal invasion occurred, as related by Walsingham. Richard II. granted the manors of Penrith, &c., to Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmorland, about the close of the fourteenth century; it has been supposed with much probability, by Messrs. Lysons, that about that time Penrith Castle was built by the Nevils, as a protection to the town, and that the church of Salkeld also was fortified at the same period.

I need not occupy time by speculations on what may have occurred in these fortress churches in olden times; on the savage attack and gallant defence, or the dreadful oaths of revenge at the sight of the wanton destruction of life and property. I am desirous, however, to recall attention to the very peculiar buildings of this class in the northern counties, as serving to remind us of a state of society now happily passed away.

ART. XI.—*Carlisle Castle*. By R. S. FERGUSON, M.A. and LL.M.

Read in Carlisle Castle, August 12th, 1874.

PART I.—DESCRIPTIVE *

THE headland or bluff, upon which the castle of Carlisle now stands, is the most northern, the highest, and the

* I wish to state that my Description of the buildings forming Carlisle Castle, is very largely based on an account of that Castle which appeared in the "Builder" newspaper, in February last, written by Mr. G. T. Clark, of Dowlais, F.S.A., the greatest authority we now possess on castles. Mr. Clark, in the kindest way possible, gave me leave to make what use I pleased of his paper, and I wish to acknowledge his kindness as publicly as possible. Many portions of my account should, in strictness, be marked with inverted commas as quotations from Mr. Clark: the valuable plans and section of the keep given with this paper were made at his suggestion.

For the Historical portion of my paper, I am much indebted to a memoir on Carlisle Castle, by the late Rev. C. H. Hartshorne, read by him at Carlisle, when the Archæological Institute met at that place in 1859. Most of his references I have myself verified in the libraries of Lincoln's Inn, and of the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle. R. S. F.

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