

## 2. TWO CHOIR STALLS OF OAK AND PART OF A PAINTED WOODEN PANEL FROM LINCLUDEN COLLEGIATE CHURCH, KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE.

These interesting stalls, hitherto in the "Queir" at Terregles, have been deposited in the Museum on loan by Captain Maxwell-Stuart of Traquair, and the panel is on loan from Dumfries Burgh Museum,<sup>1</sup> which retains part of another panel and a pilaster of another stall. They were described by James Barbour in 1883,<sup>2</sup> and were noted in the *Archæological Collections of Ayr and Galloway*<sup>3</sup> (with drawings by Macgibbon and Ross) and by the Historical Monuments Commission.<sup>4</sup>

Lincluden was re-founded as a Collegiate Church a few years before 1400 by Archibald the Grim, 3rd Earl of Douglas. Calderwood<sup>5</sup> says that John, Lord Maxwell, celebrated Mass in Lincluden Kirk at Christmas 1585, being charged to appear before the Privy Council for so doing. It would seem possible that about this date, or shortly before, the stalls were transferred to Terregles Parish Church, scarcely three miles away, and placed in the "Queir," which had been built as a burial-place<sup>6</sup> by Sir John Maxwell, 4th Lord Herries, uncle of Lord Maxwell. Lord Herries died on 20th January 1583.<sup>7</sup> There is a stone with the date 1585 on it in the Queir, which may be the year in which the Queir was completed.<sup>8</sup> The close connection of the Maxwells with Lincluden and Terregles no doubt accounts for the preservation of the stalls in the Queir, where they were long known as "the Provost's Chair of Lincluden."<sup>9</sup> When the Queir was restored in 1875,<sup>10</sup> the painted panels were discovered forming the back of the stalls. Probably they had been hidden from over-zealous Reformers.

The lower parts of both stalls, ends, backs, elbows and misericords are complete apart from small renewals where the wood has been badly worm-eaten, and they stand on a modern base. Of the upper framework only the three buttress-pilasters remain, grooved on the inner sides to take the flanges of the painted

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxx. p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Trans. Dumfriesshire and Galloway Nat. Hist. and Ant. Soc.* (Session 1883-84), p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. x. pp. 164-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in Galloway*, vol. ii. p. 250.

<sup>5</sup> *History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Woodrow Soc. 1843), vol. iv. p. 489; cf. also *Calendar of Border Papers*, vol. i, Nos. 404, 409.

<sup>6</sup> Sir W. Fraser, *The Book of Caerlaverock*, vol. i. p. 569.

<sup>7</sup> Calderwood, *op. cit.* vol. viii. p. 232.

<sup>8</sup> *Inventory*, p. 253; Macgibbon and Ross, *Eccl. Arch.*, vol. iii. p. 615.

<sup>9</sup> *New Statistical Account, Kirkcudbrightshire*, p. 232.

<sup>10</sup> The date 1875 and a joiner's name are carved on one of the new base-blocks.

panels. The upper rail is a modern addition, but probably there was a canopied top.<sup>1</sup> The stalls are 9 feet in height.

In style the carvings belong to the fifteenth century. The handrests, with stylized leaf carving, are much decayed, but the misericords, 2 feet 2.25 inches  $\times$  11.25 inches, are in excellent preservation (Pl. LI). On 13.5 inch brackets are spirited carvings, one a serpent face with curved chin, staring eyes and pointed ears, an M-shaped body and two webbed front claws. In middle of body are depressions which may be decorative, and the underside is stamped with six pointed stars with blunt ends, all identical and each measuring 0.4 inch across. The other beast has a full maned lion head with almost human features, no front legs and webbed rear claws. The pilasters, 5 feet 6.75 inches, are decorated with crockets and finials. The outer ones have two miniature carved canopies over four-sided pillars placed edgewise and having a central moulding. On the middle pillar the upper canopy is more ornate, and under it is a bracketed niche 9 inches high. Two holes at the back of the niche confirm that it has held a statuette. The pilaster in Dumfries Museum is of this type.

The panel, also of oak, 5 feet 6.75 inches  $\times$  1 foot 3.4 inches  $\times$  0.75 inch, and made of two planks, the third being missing, is intended to be placed between the pilasters. When the begrimed surface was cleaned in the Museum no traces of pigment were found, but the surface of the wood is raised, "embossed" as it were, where it has been protected by paint, sufficiently to show that it depicted a crowned female figure with long plaited hair. Her left arm is across her body, and she is wearing a gown, with a mantle of a different colour, fastened at the throat by a flat circular brooch. The crown has alternating fleur-de-lis and short points. The colouring was apparently good enough in 1883 for Barbour to give a detailed description:<sup>2</sup> yellow hair, inner garment reddish brown, mantle wholly blue, with yellow border and white lining. The other authorities already quoted, writing in 1899<sup>3</sup> and 1911,<sup>4</sup> follow Barbour, but say without qualification that the upper part of the dress is blue. Barbour identified the figure as the Virgin Mary, to whom the College was dedicated.

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