

ART. II.—*The Carvings in the Entrance to Major MacIvor's Cell, Carlisle Castle.* By F. J. FIELD.

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IN the thickness of the eastern wall of the top storey of the Keep at Carlisle Castle is a small mural chamber which, in its turn, gives entrance, on the left and on the right, to two cells. A small recessed window in the eastern end of this chamber discloses a view of the Inner Ward of the Castle and the remnants of Queen Mary's Tower.

The northern and southern walls of this chamber, as well as the side walls of the window embrasure, are covered with carvings, obviously the work in bygone years of a prisoner who found time hanging heavily upon his hands. Similarity of style makes it obvious that all are by the same hand, but each item in the display has been cut independently of the rest, no proportion has been observed between the various figures and objects, and no attempt has been made to co-ordinate the parts to a whole. The work in short has not been conceived as a design.

Early guides at the Castle ascribed these carvings to Major MacIvor, or rather Major Macdonald the original of the tragic figure in Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*, who, according to tradition, was imprisoned after the 1745 rebellion in the cell opening to the left. Such a theory is really quite untenable. The work is obviously very much older than the 18th century. It is largely heraldic, and moreover this heraldry is local and medieval. Major MacIvor could have no knowledge of, and little interest in, Cumberland armory of the Middle Ages.

It remains then to discover whether we can assign a

rough date to this work, and make a reasonable guess as to the man responsible for it.

The carvings themselves provide the only evidence we have. A brief description of these is therefore necessary. First, however, it is necessary to point out that the heraldic items are mostly household badges—bearings which must not be confused with either crests or coats-of-arms. The *badge* was a device used, not by the owner himself, but by his retainers, who wore it embroidered upon the breasts or sleeves of their tunics. As a badge could be perpetuated or discarded without reference to any authority we find some families using, at various times in their history, as many as half-a-dozen. This is partly accounted for by the fact that badges were *heritable* from other families, and unlike coats-of-arms and crests, could be used freely by the heirs of a family in the female line.

But to turn to the carvings themselves.

On the northern side of the window embrasure there are:

1. Two small human figures, one above the other, the uppermost one with its arm raised, and partly obliterated.

On the southern side of the window embrasure are:

2. An heraldic rose of four petals. Perhaps that of York. *Vide infra*.

3. A crescent inverted enclosing a fetterlock. *A badge of the Percies of Cockermouth and Alnwick*.

4. A shield: in the dexter half, two water-bougets in pale: in the sinister, three fusils conjoined in fess. There is no palar line dividing the two halves of this shield, but it is obviously meant for the *arms of Roos* (who bore, however, *three* water-bougets) *impaling Percy*.

On the small space of wall between the left-hand cell and the window:

5. An heraldic rose of four petals.

6. A wheel of six spokes supported by a human



PLATE I.—Badges of the Dacre, Greystoke, Percy, Vaux and Roos families in Carlisle Castle Keep, late fifteenth century.

Facing p. 14.

figure in base, and with a female head peeping over the top.

On the southern wall at the entrance to the right-hand cell:

7. A bull passant collared. *A badge of Dacre of Dacre and Gilsland.*

8. A flower of eight petals.

On the southern wall (*vide* plate I):

9. A knight facing the dexter, his left hand on his hip and his right arm raised and flourishing a sword. He wears a helm with visor raised. Between his feet is a small cross with the perpendicular shaft forked in base. This military figure is flanked on the dexter by a ragged staff, and on the sinister by a saltire coupé between two escallops in pale. The ragged staff was a ? *Greystoke* or *GreySTOCK* badge, and the escallop a *Dacre* one.

10. Three escallops 2 and 1, as arranged in *the Dacre coat-of-arms.*

11. A water-bouget (*badge of Roos*) arranged in pale with three fusils conjoined in fess (*badge of Percy*).

12. A naked female figure standing frontface with hands on hip, and wearing a circular headdress or tiara.

13. An escallop loosely knotted to a ragged staff. A famous *Dacre* badge, perhaps not adopted before the marriage of Thomas Lord Dacre (d. 1525) and Elizabeth Greystoke late in the 15th century. *Vide* Woodward and Burnett, *A Treatise on Heraldry*, 1891, ii, p. 585.

14. A cross treflé standing on three steps or degrees.

15. A fleur-de-lis.

16. An escallop. *A badge of Dacre.*

17. A harp.

18. A lion passant guardant crowned. *A badge of Greystoke Lord Greystoke.*

19. A large feathered griffin passant to the dexter, wings raised. The forefeet and head have been broken off. Between its legs what appears to be the Dacre knot.

The griffin was a *Dacre badge* inherited from Vaux of Gilsland.

This griffin is followed by ? a young griffin collared.

20. Three birds, 1 and 2.

21. A martlet wings closed facing the sinister.

22. Two dolphins hauriant embowed in fess facing the sinister. The dolphin was a *Greystoke badge*.

23. A boar passant. Perhaps the boar badge of the *Yorkist Captain, Richard Plantagenet*, afterwards Richard III.

24. A stag head coupé. The stag was a *Dacre badge*.

25. A single fetterlock. *Badge of Percy*.

26. A crescent inverted enclosing a fetterlock. *Badge of Percy*.

27. An escallop. *Badge of Dacre*.

28. An heraldic rose of four petals.

29. Three fleur-de-lis in fess.

30. A man's head in profile with the visor of his helmet raised.

31. A fleur-de-lis.

32. A small winged and feathered griffin passant to the dexter. *Badge of Vaux and Dacre*.

33. A woman's head wearing a conical headdress. Full-faced and coupé at the neck.

34. A head wearing a flat-topped hat or cap, full-faced and coupé at the neck.

35. A man's head in profile, with visor of helm raised.

36. An heraldic knot.

37. A single fetterlock. *A Percy badge*.

38. Crude harp, or fetterlock.

39. A naked female figure, standing full-faced with hands on hips.

40. A boar passant. *Vide No. 23*.

41. A ? fox issuing from a ? boat between two birds, which are regarding it with manifest interest.



PLATE II.—Carvings in Major MacIvor's Cell in Carlisle Castle.

Facing p. 16.

On the northern wall (*vide* plate II) :

42. St. George in armour, visor raised, trampling upon the dragon, his left hand grasping his scabbard, in his right a spear, the point of which he is thrusting down the dragon's throat.

43. A shield charged with a quatrefoil voided.

44. An escallop. *A Dacre badge.*

45. A man's head in profile, visor of helmet raised.

46. A merman full-faced standing upon his tail, left hand on hip, right arm raised and flourishing an annulet or ring. *Vide* no. 57.

47. A cross upon a mount.

48. Christ upon the Cross flanked by the two Maries standing full-face, hands clasped in prayer.

49. The two Maries standing full-faced, hands clasped in prayer. The figure with loose flowing hair ? St. Mary Magdalene, that with a crown ? the Virgin.

50. A fleur-de-lis.

51. A naked female figure full-faced, the arms stretched above the head, wrists manacled and chained, the whole figure suspended by these chains.

52. A six-foil.

53. The holy symbol I H S, in base a small heraldic knot.

54. A small naked female figure front-faced with a circular head-dress, hands on hips.

55. A naked female figure front-faced with a circular head-dress, hands on hips, and with three large arrows piercing each side of the body.

56. Two male figures in the middle of a dispute. That on the right has seized his companion by the girdle and is flourishing a knife or stick in his upraised right hand. That on the left has his left hand on his hip, and has seized the other man by the hair.

57. A mermaid front-faced tail turned to the dexter, left hand on hip, and holding aloft, in her right hand, a round object, perhaps a mirror.

58. A dolphin embowed, apparently about to swallow a fish. The dolphin was a *Greystoke badge*.

59. A boar passant. *Vide* no. 23.

On the northern wall at the entrance of the left-hand cell (Major MacIvor's):

60. A female figure full-faced holding a balance of two scales, in each of which is a human head full-faced.

61. An inverted shield charged with three annulets, one and two. No known local family previous to the 18th century bore this coat, though Vipont, Lowther and Musgrave all bore *six* annulets. To invert a shield was to defame its bearer, but it is doubtful if an insult is intended in this instance.

A seal of Idonea, d. 1333, a co-heiress of de Vipont, was engraved (exceptionally) with *three* annulets. *Vide Machell MSS.*, i, p. 238. This was probably due to exigencies of space. On the same seal the six lioncels of Roger de Layburn, her husband, are reduced to three. An early 18th century tombstone in Lanercost churchyard to members of an old yeoman family named Richardson also gives a shield charged with three annulets.

62. A cross treflé or botony on four steps or degrees.

63. A fleur-de-lis.

64. A hind's head contourné. Perhaps a *Dacre badge*.

65. A ragged staff and an escallop. *Badges of ? Greystoke and Dacre*.

66. An heraldic knot.

67. A ? winged female figure full-faced.

68. A cross mounted on five steps or degrees.

69. A crescent inverted enclosing a fetterlock. *Badge of Percy*.

70. A cartouche charged with a female head full-faced and coupé at the neck.

71. An escallop and ragged staff. *Badges of Dacre and ? Greystoke*.

72. A stag trippant collared. *Badge of Dacre*.

73. Three human heads, one full-faced, the others in profile.

74. A wyvern. ? *Badge of Clifford.*

75. A cross coupé and pierced in the centre and at each extremity.

76. A human head full-faced.

77. A naked female figure full-faced with circular headdress, and hands on hips.

78. Two male heads in profile facing each other, that to the dexter with flat hat or cap, that to the sinister with a conical one.

79. A female figure full-faced, naked to the waist, skirted, with a circular headdress, left hand on hip, right arm encircling a child who flourishes a cross in his right hand and has just thrown a ball into the air with his left.

80. A rose of eight petals.

The chief evidence of the date when these devices were carved is provided by the costume worn by the human figures which appear among them. These costumes at once identify the work as that of the fifteenth century. The type of helm which is worn by the man in Nos. 9, 30, 42 and 45 has a movable visor, with pointed beak hinged on each side of the headpiece near the ear so that it can be raised onto the forehead. This kind of helm, known as the Armet (Balfour Paul, *Heraldry in Relation to Scottish History and Art*, 1900, p. 33), was first introduced in southern England at the beginning of the 15th century, and remained in use throughout that period. Its introduction in Scotland was later (*ibid.*, p. 34), for it does not appear on Scottish armorial seals until the first years of the 16th century. It probably came into use in Cumberland at an intermediate period, about the time of the Wars of the Roses.

This fact recalls the presence among the carvings of heraldic roses. *Vide* nos. 2, 5 and 80. Are these intended for the white rose of York, or the red rose of Lancaster?

The association of the boar passant with them (*vide* nos. 23, 40 and 59) leaves little room for doubt that the white rose is intended, for a white boar passant was the badge of the famous Yorkist captain, Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. His boar, indeed, was, with the exception of the bear and ragged staff of Nevill, the King-Maker Earl of Warwick, the most widely recognised badge of the 15th century. Many will recall the satirical reference to Richard III in the couplet,

‘ The Cat, the Rat and Lovel our Dog,
Rule all England under the *Hog*,’

and the fulminations of Queen Margaret against the Crookback in Shakespeare’s play—

‘ Thou elvish-mark’d, abortive, rooting *hog* !’

In the fifth act the ghosts of the murdered princes address the future victor of Bosworth thus—

‘ Sleep, Richmond, sleep in peace, and wake in joy,
Good angels guard thee from the *boar*’s annoy.’

Richard, when Governor of Carlisle Castle, built, or rebuilt, the Tile Tower, and had his badge of the boar cut upon the stonework there, where it is still to be seen.

It would seem then that the man who is responsible for the carvings in the Keep of Carlisle Castle was Yorkist in sympathy.

A few of the carvings are of religious significance, many are doubtless the offspring of mere whim or fancy, but a large number is heraldic. As already stated the heraldic devices illustrated are almost without exception badges of local medieval families. The families concerned are Vaux, Roos, Clifford, Percy, Greystoke, and Dacre—all, it will be noted, of baronial rank. Clifford is represented, perhaps rather dubiously, by one item, no. 74; Roos twice (nos. 4 and 11), in each instance in a way that seems to hint at some marital alliance with Percy. Percy is more liberally represented, but it is obvious throughout

the whole work that emphasis is laid on Dacre and Greystoke bearings.

Now Thomas (d. 1525), Lord Dacre, son of Humphrey (d. 1485), Lord Dacre, married, sometime in the late 15th century, Elizabeth (d. 1516), grand-daughter and heiress of the last Lord Greystoke of Greystoke. By this marriage the Dacres, who were already representatives of the Vaux family (*vide* the griffin badge, nos. 19 and ? 74) through a marriage in 1317 with the heiress of the Multons who had married the heiress of Vaux, became also the representatives of the Greystokes, and by heraldic custom, *would inherit their badges*. It is, in fact, surmised that the ragged staff and escallop badge of Dacre was a conjunction of a canting badge (the ragged staff or tree-stock) of Greystoke and the escallop of Dacre, especially contrived to symbolise the union of the two houses (*vide supra*, no. 13).

A detailed pedigree of the Dacre family is still a desideratum, but it is known for certain that there was no match between Dacre and Roos, Percy or Clifford in the main line of descent. Humphrey (d. 1485), Lord Dacre, however, married Mabel, daughter of Sir Thomas Parr of Kendal, whose ancestor had married the heiress of Roos of Kendal and was therefore their representative. The marriage between Humphrey Dacre and Mabel Parr would account reasonably enough for the water bougets of Roos which figure among the carvings in Carlisle Keep. The Percy badges must mark some marital alliance between that family, and either Dacre or Roos, but most probably the latter. The 'Clifford' wyvern I cannot explain, unless it was in reality intended as a variant of the griffin of Vaux, a thing by no means improbable in an age which still brought freedom and originality to heraldic design, and was indifferent to the minutiae so beloved of heralds, both professional and amateur, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

Whether or not no. 74 is the wyvern of Clifford, the carvings, as a whole, may be safely interpreted as the work of a Dacre. They were almost certainly executed after the Dacre-Greystoke alliance, and probably before or immediately following the accession of Henry VII, in 1485, since the presence of the rose and boar badges betray a very topical and partisan interest in the rival factions of York and Lancaster.

The Dacres were, during the final part of the civil wars of the 15th century, Yorkist in sympathy. Thomas Lord Dacre, head of the family in the reign of Henry VI, sided with Lancaster, but his death and that of his eldest surviving son, Ranulph, at the battle of Towton in 1461, led to his second son and heir, Humphrey, viewing the political situation from an entirely different angle. Humphrey went over to the side of Edward IV to recover the forfeited estates; and, prospering by this course, remained faithful to the Yorkists. Denton (*Accompt*, p. 119) hints that his marriage with Mabel Parr was one of cold-blooded policy—she was ‘daughter of the King’s favourite.’ Denton is, perhaps, not entirely impartial in his account, and pardonably so. The antiquary’s ancestors, lords of the manor of Ainstable, undeterred by the presence of the powerful Dacre family at Kirkoswald Castle nearby, supported the Yorkist cause from the first, and throughout the vicissitudes of the war ruggedly stuck to the side they had chosen. Their reward for a loyalty not at all common in that turncoat period was the permanent loss of their manor. During the predominance of Lancaster, the Dacres seized Ainstable, and Humphrey Dacre refused to surrender it when he, in his turn, became a Yorkist. He had married a ‘daughter of the King’s favourite’—and could practise injustice with impunity. Thereafter the Dentons had to content themselves with their other small manor of Cardew, until a second loyalty led to their final ruin following on the Civil War of the 17th century.

The carvings in Carlisle Keep may, incidentally, be profitably compared with those cut by prisoners in Beauchamp's Tower in the Tower of London. These last, which were the work of many individuals, have been largely identified and dated by means of their heraldry and inscriptions. In date they range, roughly, from 1450 to 1550. There are many analogous features in the style and character of the work at London and Carlisle.

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