

KING EDWARD'S SPOILIATIONS IN SCOTLAND IN A.D. 1296—THE  
CORONATION STONE—ORIGINAL AND UNPUBLISHED EVIDENCE.

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THE first northern campaign of King Edward, in which he reduced John Balliol, King of Scotland, to submission, is marked by two circumstances, both of which, though but of the underwood of history, are of singular interest to both nations. These are, first, the seizure of the royal treasures in the castle of Edinburgh; and secondly, the removal to Westminster, from the Abbey of Scone, near Perth, of the chair in which the Kings of Scotland had been accustomed to sit when crowned, and the "fatal" or sacred stone which was inclosed within it.

The historical evidence which we now possess on this campaign is not of that minute and particular kind which the antiquarian mind requires: and concerning the two incidents above named, little is authentically told. Not but that in the main the historians have reported the facts truly, as far as they go. What I propose is a little to extend the information they have given us: and I rely upon the Institute not forgetting that as antiquaries or archaeologists we are solicitous about mere facts and dates, content to leave the nobler province to the historian and philosopher.

When the King of England had formed the resolution to reduce by force of arms the realm of Scotland to the submission to which he had already brought the Welsh princes, his policy being that the whole population of the isle of Britain should be under one sovereignty, he moved rapidly in the winter through Yorkshire and Northumberland to the town of Berwick. It is unnecessary that I should trouble the Institute with the dates of these movements. About the 28th of March, he was before Berwick. This was in 1296, the twenty-fourth year of his reign. Berwick soon

surrendered, and the king remained there during the greater part of the month of April, towards the close of which was fought the battle of Dunbar, which broke for that time the power of Scotland. The king did not, as might have been expected, advance immediately upon Edinburgh, but spent the month of May in marches and countermarches in the country about Haddington, Jedworth, Roxborough, and Castleton "in valle Lydd." This is gathered from the testes of his writs, and is supported by the diary of this campaign printed in the *Archaeologia* of the Society of Antiquaries, vol. xxi. p. 498. It may be observed by the way, that this diary is evidently the work of a contemporary, and is worthy to be received as an authentic account of the king's movements, being so well supported by dates of the king's writs. At the beginning of June he arrived at Edinburgh. The Castle was bravely defended; but at length it yielded, and with the loss of this fortress, ensuing on the battle of Dunbar, the military operations may be said to have ceased, and the further progress of Edward was little less than a triumphal march of a conqueror.

He remained at Edinburgh till the 14th of June: and in those few days it appears to have been, that, being completely master of the place, he forced his way into the treasuries of the Kings of Scotland, and selected such things as he thought proper to be removed as *spolia opima*, partly to enrich his own treasury, and partly to break the spirit of a brave people struggling to maintain their ancient independence.

That he removed or destroyed the ancient records of the kingdom is asserted, and the document which I shall first adduce will show that some things of this nature were at this time taken by him, beside those which a few years before had been exhibited at Norham, and perhaps never returned. That he took away the ancient crown and sceptre, and other insignia of sovereignty, is also asserted; and of this act of rapine there seems to be sufficient proof, though it receives no support from the inventories, as far as they are known to me, of his choicer possessions in the later years of his reign. Things which he actually removed will appear from a schedule entitled "*Inventa in Castro de Edeneburgh*," one of a collection of such schedules, forming together an inventory of the cups, jewels, &c.,

belonging to the king : everything indeed which fell under the head Jocalia. This list was compiled very soon after his return from this expedition.

## INVENTA IN CASTRO DE EDENEBURGH.

## I. IN COFFRO CUM CRUCE SUNT INFRA SCRIPTA :

Primo. Unum forcerium<sup>1</sup> pulerum in quo sunt hæc :

unum pulvinarium<sup>2</sup> de armis, fractum.

unus morsus<sup>3</sup> deauratus.

una crux stangnea

unum pulvinarium cum griffonibus

duo panni de arista<sup>4</sup>

una alba de armis Regis Angliæ.

una stola et unum fanum.<sup>5</sup>

Item unum pulvinarium de armis Regis Scotiæ coopertum sindone rubro.

una crocia<sup>6</sup> deaurata quæ fuit Episcopi Rossensis.

una nux cum pede et cooperculo argento deaurato munito.

unus ciphus de cristallo cum pede deaurata.

unus ciphus totum cristallo argento munitus.

tria cornua eburnea harnesiata cum serico et argento

unum cornu de bugle

duo parvi costelli<sup>7</sup> de tammari<sup>8</sup> muniti argento

unus parvus ciphus argenteus deauratus cum pede de mazer<sup>9</sup>

unus ciphus de tammari cum pede argentea

una nux cum pede argentea deaurata, fracta.

unus ciphus de cristallo cum pede argentea deaurata, fractus.

## II. IN COFFRO CUM L.

Primo. duo costelli de cristallo argento ligati.

unus mazerus<sup>1</sup> cum pede et cooperculo argento munito deaurato.

unus ciphus de ove griffini<sup>2</sup> fracto in toto argento munitus<sup>3</sup>

unus ciphus de cristallo cum pede argenti deaurati.

unus ciphus cum cooperculo de mugetto<sup>4</sup> et una pede argenti deaurati

unus piccherus de mugetto argento deaurato munitus.

unus mazerus sine pede parvi valoris.

[The three entries which follow are cancelled, and the reason is given in the margin :—Intranturn in Libro.]

una navis argenti ponderis ix<sup>1b</sup>.

unum par pelvium argenti, ponderis vii<sup>1</sup>.

unum par pelvium argenti ponderis cxvii<sup>sol</sup>. vi<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A small chest.

<sup>2</sup> A small shrine or perhaps altar, adapted to fit a travelling chapel.

<sup>3</sup> Clasp.

<sup>4</sup> Hair—a hair cloth for penance.

<sup>5</sup> Albe, stole, and maniple. <sup>6</sup> Crozier.

<sup>7</sup> Costelli is written by mistake for costrelli, as in the corresponding entry in another inventory of the twenty-ninth year. The costrelli were drinking-cups. See Ducange.

<sup>8</sup> Tamarisk-wood.

<sup>9</sup> Maple. This entry is cancelled.

<sup>1</sup> A maple bowl.

<sup>2</sup> A griffin's egg, really an egg of the ostrich, if not rather a cocoa-nut.

<sup>3</sup> Cancelled.

<sup>4</sup> This word is not in the original Ducange, or in his Continuator, nor in other glossaries where it might be expected to appear.

## III. IN COFFRO DE N.

[The whole of the following entries are cancelled, and for the reason given in the former case. But it is added—'Restituantur postea in garderoba.']

Ciphus magnus argenteus deauratus cum pede et cooperculo pond. vi marc ii<sup>s</sup>. vi<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede et cooperculo pond. lviii<sup>s</sup>. ix<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede et cooperculo pond. xlvi<sup>s</sup>. viii<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede et cooperculo pond. l<sup>s</sup>. minus iii<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede et cooperculo pond. xxxviii<sup>s</sup>. vi<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti cum pede et cooperculo pond. lii<sup>s</sup>. xi<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede et sine cooperculo pond. xxxv<sup>s</sup>. iii<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede et cooperculo pond. i. marc xviii<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti cum pede sine cooperculo pond. xxxviii<sup>s</sup>. iii<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti albus cum pede sine cooperculo pond. xx<sup>s</sup>. minus v<sup>d</sup>.

Ciphus argenti deaurati cum pede sine cooperculo pond. xxiii<sup>s</sup>.

Ciphus argenti platus pond. xxiii<sup>s</sup>. vi<sup>d</sup>.

Picherus argenti cum cooperculo pond. xli<sup>s</sup>. iii<sup>d</sup>.

Picherus ad aquam albus pond. xxvi<sup>s</sup>.

Unum lavatorium ad aquam argenti album pond. xxii<sup>s</sup>.

Picherus argenti ad aquam albus pond. xx<sup>s</sup>. viii<sup>d</sup>.

On the dorse of this part of the inventory is the following important notice.

Et memorandum quod xvii die Septembris, anno xxiii<sup>to</sup> omnia Jocalia infra scripta mittebantur de Berewico usque London per Johannem Candelarium in tribus Cofris cum signis ut infra. Et unum magnum Cofrum et ii. parvos Cofros cum diversis scriptis et memorandis inventis in Castro de Edeneburgh: et unum Cofrum cum reliquiis inventis ibidem: et xix cornua de Bucle, et unum cornu griffone; quæ liberata fuerunt in Garderoba per Dominum Robertum Giffard et Dominum Hugonem de Roburo quæ inventa fuerunt in quodam Prioratu juxta Forfare: et unum fardellum cum diversis rebus quæ fuerunt Episcopi Sancti Andrei liberatum in Garderoba per Dominum J. de Swineborn militem et custodem ejusdem Episcopatus mense Septembris in principio: et unum discum magnum argenteum pro elemosyna.

Et omnia ista liberavit dictus Johannes Domino Johanni de Drokensford: quæ idem dominus Johannes deposuit in Garderoba Westmonasterium.

It will not be out of place if we add that in another inventory of the king's "Jocalia," formed in the 31st year of his reign, we find:

una pix cum impressione sigilli regni Scociæ.

unus panerius coopertus corio nigro ferro ligatus, in quo continentur scripta magnatum et aliorum regni Scociæ facta Regi de fidelitatis suis et homagiis post guerram Scociæ anno xxiii<sup>to</sup>.

duo pallia ad pendenda in ecclesia quæ venerunt de Scocia, cooperta de viridi baud.

unus costrellus ligneus involutus panno lineo sigillatus sigillis diversis.

unus Cofrus rubeus in quo continentur Litera et Argumenta tangencia regnum et dominium Scoeciæ et fidelitatem homagii Regis et Magnatum Scoeciæ.

We left the King of England at Edinburgh. He marched on to Stirling, where his writs are dated from the 16th to the 20th of June. On the 21st he was at Ughtrahurdur (Auchterarder), and on the 22nd he arrived at Perth. He halted there for a few days, as afterwards at Cluny and Forfar, and on the 7th or 8th he arrived at Montrose. There he remained till the 11th, and during the time received the submission of Balliol and many of the magnates. He then passed on to Aberdeen, Kyntore, and "Elgin in Moravia," so designated in the writs, confirming so far the statement in the old chroniclers, through whose orthography we should hardly, without assistance, recognise the name of this ancient town.

He advanced no farther north. On the 2nd of August he was at "Kyncardine in Neel," from whence he passed to Brechin, Dundee, and Perth. That he visited Perth on his return from Elgin, a fact which we find in the Itinerary, is a confirmation, worthy regard, of the statement of the English chroniclers Walsingham and Hemingford, that it was on his return southward that he visited the Abbey of Scone, for Scone is situated very near to Perth. The ancient kings of Scotland had been crowned at Scone, and in the Abbey there was kept the fatal stone inclosed in a chair in which the kings had been accustomed to sit when the crown was placed upon their heads. For this stone they claimed what appears to be a fabulous antiquity. It was no less than one of the stones in the stony region of Beth-El, nay, the very stone on which the head of the patriarch Jacob rested when he saw the vision of angels; and there was a story belonging to it of its having been brought by way of Egypt into Spain, of its resting in Galicia, of its being carried from thence to Ireland, of its removal to Argyleshire, where it was placed in the royal castle of Dunstaffnag, from whence it was removed to this Abbey of Scone. History finds it there, though it may know nothing of its previous wanderings, and may repudiate entirely the names and the dates, which are not wanting in the traditions respecting it.

Whatever amount of credit may be given to its earlier

conditions, there is no doubt that when at Scone it was regarded with superstitious reverence, and that a large amount of affection and patriotism was gathered around it. But it was looked upon with other feelings. It was regarded as assuring secure possession to the kings of Scotland of whatever land in which it was found, and it is alleged, perhaps on somewhat doubtful authority, that before it had left Scone these verses were inscribed upon it or near to it :—

*Ni fallat Fatum, Scotia hunc quocunque locatum  
Inveniunt lapidem, regnare, tenentur ibidem.*

It was, therefore, strictly in accordance with the line of King Edward's policy to get possession of this ancient and venerable relique, and to remove it far from the sight of a people whose spirit of independence it so directly tended to foster. He spent only one day at Perth, and we can hardly doubt that he then personally visited the Abbey of Scone, and that under his immediate inspection the stone was removed, and the chair perhaps destroyed, as we hear no more of it in documents in which the stone itself is mentioned.

The king, on returning to Berwick, where he proposed to remain for some weeks, passed through Edinburgh, where he arrived on Friday, the 17th of August. There is some slight reason for thinking that he might deposit the stone for a time in the Castle; for in one of the royal inventories—that which was made in his thirty-fifth year, the year in which he died at Burgh on the Sands—it is said to have been found in the Castle of Edinburgh. But this is so contrary to much other evidence, that unless we regard it as referring to a temporary abode there after its removal from Scone, we must look upon it as an error.

Its removal to Westminster ensued very speedily on its being taken from Scone. It occurs in several inventories of the choice possessions of the king, where it is described simply thus: *Una petra magna super quam Reges Scociæ solebant coronari.* The king treated it with the highest respect. We have the testimony of his epitaph that he was a devout prince :

*Filius ipse Dei, quem corde colebat, et ore ;*

and indeed the whole course of his history shows it, especially his expedition to Palestine. We may call him a

superstitious prince, even with all his fine qualities and admirable abilities as a temporal ruler, carrying about with him, as he did, sacred reliques, and storing among his choicer possessions, two pieces of the rock of Calvary, which were presented to him by one Robert Ailward. It is, perhaps, not going beyond the limit of legitimate conjecture to suppose that he gave credit to the ancient traditions, and seriously regarded it, if not the very stone on which the head of the Patriarch had rested, yet, as at least, a stone from the plain of Beth-El, which had once formed part of the piece of Cyclopeian architecture, which the Pentateuch informs us the Patriarch had there erected in memory of so remarkable a vision. In accordance with this, its religious character, he determined to give it a place in the chapel at Westminster, recently erected by his father, inclosing the shrine of King Edward the Confessor. There, also, the remains of his father and of his own Queen Eleanor were deposited, and there he himself intended to lie. No place more sacred than this could have been chosen. There was an altar opposite the shrine. It stood where are now the two Coronation Chairs. The stone was deposited near this altar, where it may be presumed daily services were performed. In contemplating it in its place, which we may now do, to feel the full effect of the scene, we should for the moment restore, in imagination, the altar and its appendages, and lay aside for the time the low esteem in which reliques, however sacred, are in these times held.

But the king had a further purpose respecting it. He prided himself on having brought his affairs in Scotland to a successful issue. He is described on his monument as "*Malleus Scotorum*," and here was the proof—the stone on which the fate of Scotland might be said to hang.

Further, he determined that it should be devoted to the same purpose to which it had been devoted while in the possession of the Scots. It had formed part of the Coronation Chair of Scotland: it was now to be the seat on which future sovereigns of England should be seated when they were anointed with the sacred oil, had the diadem placed upon their brow, and the sceptre in their hand. And with this intention he ordered a chair to be constructed, and the stone to be placed immediately beneath the seat. That this was done with a view to its future use as the throne on which



the sovereign was to sit on the day of the coronation, appears from the following entry by a contemporary hand in the Inventory of the last year of his reign :—"Mittebatur per preceptum Regis usque Abbathiam de Westmonasterio ad assedendum ibidem juxta feretrum Sancti Edwardi, in quadam cathedra lignea deaurata quam Rex fieri precepit [ut Reges Angliæ et Scociæ infra sederent die Coronationis eorundem] ad perpetuam rei memoriam." This may be set against what Walsingham states, "jubens inde fieri celebrantium cathedram sacerdotum." I ought to add, however, that the words inclosed in brackets have a line drawn through them ; but still they may be taken as good proof, with other circumstances, and the subsequent usage, that the chair was, as to its original purpose, the Coronation Chair.

The king's first intention was that the chair should be of bronze, and Adam, his goldsmith, had made considerable progress in the work, when the king changed his purpose, and directed that a chair of wood should be constructed, and he called in the assistance of Master Walter, his painter, to decorate it with his art. We learn these particulars from a piece of evidence of a character remarkably authentic, the bill of Adam the goldsmith of expenses for which he claimed payment. This bill is entitled—"Compotus Adæ aurifabri Regis de jocalibus emptis ad opus Regis ; et de aurifabria diversa facta per eundem anno xxvii<sup>o</sup> et anno xxviii<sup>o</sup> usque xxvii diem Marci." An extract from this account of so much as relates to the chair, is the second piece of original evidence which I proposed to lay before the Institute.

Eidem [id est Adæ] pro diversis custibus per ipsum factis circa quandam cathedram de cupro quam Rex prius fieri preceperat anno xxv<sup>o</sup> post reditum suum de Scocia, pro petra super quam Reges Scociæ solebant coronari inventa apud Scone anno xxiii<sup>o</sup> superponenda juxta altare ante feretrum Sancti Edwardi in Ecclesia Abbathiæ Westmonasterii : et nunc eadem petra in quadam cathedra de ligno facta per Magistrum Walterum pictorem Regis loco dictæ Cathedræ quæ prius ordinata fuit de cupro est assessa : videlicet pro una Cathedra de ligno facta ad exemplar alterius cathedræ fundenda de cupro—c sol.—Et pro m<sup>i</sup> d lib. cupri emptis una cum stagno empto ad idem cuprum allaiaandum xii lib. v sol.—Et pro vadiis et stipendiis unius operarii fundentis eandem cathedram et preparantis pecios ejusdem una cum formis ad hoc inveniendum et faciendum ; per certam conventionem factam cum eodem, x lib.—Et pro stipendiis diversorum operancium in metallo predicto post formationem ejusdem cathedræ mensibus Junii et Julii ante primum diem Augusti anno xxv<sup>o</sup> quo die dictæ operationes cessarunt ex toto per preceptum Regis ratione passagii sui versus Flandriam,



ix lib. vii sol. xi den.—Et pro ustilementis emptis pro operationibus predictis et emendacione aliorum per vices, xl sol.—Et pro duobus leopardis parvis de ligno faciendis depingendis et deaurandis, et liberatis Magistro Waltero pictori ad assidendis super cathedram de ligno factam per dictum Magistrum Walterum per utrasque costas, xiii sol. iiii den. per compotum factum cum eodem apud Westmonasterium xxvii die Marci anno xxviii<sup>o</sup>.

Summa xxxix lib., vi sol. iiii den.

There is another notice of work performed on this chair, in the Wardrobe Account of the 29th of the reign, published from the original in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries.

Magistro Waltero pictori, pro custubus et expensis per ipsum factis circa unum gradum faciendum ad pedem novæ cathedræ in qua petra Scociæ reponitur juxta altare ante feretrum Sancti Edwardi in Ecclesia Abbatiae Westmonaster' juxta ordinationem Regis, mense Martii, et in stipendiis carpentariorum et pictorum eundem gradum depingencium, et pro auro et coloribus diversis emptis pro eadem depingenda; una cum factura unius cassi pro dicta cathedra cooperianda, sicut patet per particulas inde in garderoba liberatas, i lib. xix sol. vii den.

The position in the Chapel of Saint Edward the Confessor occasioned the chair to be called Saint Edward's chair, by which name it is usually spoken of, when people had become familiar with it. Now, when called into use, it is covered with cloth of gold; but when Queen Elizabeth sat in it, we find the following entry of decorations for what is called the Siege Royal: "Cloth of silver incarnate, for covering Saint Edward's Chair, 18½ yards. Fringe of red silk and silver, 7lbs. and 3½ oz. Bawdekyn crimson and green and other mean silk, for covering the steps going up into the Mount, 149 yards. Says of the largest size, 12 pieces. Says of the lesser size for the Siege Royal, 17 pieces. Cusshions out of the wardrobe."

When the fortune of war turned against England, and a less vigorous successor lost all that King Edward had gained in Scotland, it is stated that there were negotiations for the return of this stone; and it is even alleged that the return of it was one of the articles of the Treaty at Northampton in the second year of King Edward the Third. No such clause is found in the copy of the treaty in the *Foedera*; but that such an act was contemplated seems to be implied in the terms of a Royal Writ, of the date of July 1, 1328, addressed to the Abbot and Monks of Westminster, setting forth that the Council had come to the resolution of giving up the

stone, and requiring them to deliver it to the Sheriff of London, to be carried to the Queen Mother. This writ, it will be observed, is for its delivery to the Queen Mother, meaning Isabella. Her influence was then beginning to be looked upon with jealousy by the English nobles, who may have in some way not now known, frustrated in this particular the Queen's policy.

However, it is manifest that it was not returned ; for the Scottish historians do not claim the recovery of it among the good deeds done to their nation by Robert Bruce, and the stone and the chair in which it was enclosed may still be seen in the chapel at Westminster.

One word more respecting the alleged antiquity of the stone, which Toland does not hesitate to call "the ancientest respected monument in the world." In considering this question we are to try its claims to be what the traditions of the middle ages claimed for it, by the same tests by which other reliques of high antiquity are tested. We are not to expect written evidence as we do for transactions of a time when the art of writing was extensively used, but *early traditional belief supported by parallel usages or incidents, and free from gross improbabilities*. Few in this instance will contend for the dates, or for the existence even of the person who is said to have brought it from Egypt ; but there is nothing which violently shocks the sense of probability and the regard which all must cherish for maintaining the truth of history, in supposing that some Christian devotee, in perhaps the second, third, or fourth century, brought this stone from the stony territory of the plain of Luz, having persuaded himself that it was the very stone on which the head of the patriarch had rested when he saw the vision of Angels ; or had even become possessed of the very stone which is said to have been preserved in the Holy of Holies of the second Temple at Jerusalem, with the tradition that it had been Jacob's pillow. Where is the improbability that when the Temple was destroyed, this stone should pass into the hands of a devotee, to be preserved by him, as the altar of the church of Doncaster was preserved by Thridwulf in the wood of Elmete, when the church was burnt by the Pagans. Once in the possession of such a person, it would be cherished by him as King Edward cherished the portions of the rock of Calvary which were presented to him, or as his

uncle the King of the Romans cherished the Christian reliques of the most sacred character which he brought to England. Once preserved and venerated, nothing is more probable than that it should at length be found in Galicia, where Christianity took deep root in the very earliest ages of the Church. There is no natural impossibility in its passing from thence into Ireland, the land of Saints, and where races of people have claimed a Spanish origin, and from thence to Scotland. That it there became allied to Royalty is but in accordance with what appears to have been the usages of the island,—the stone at Kingston upon Thames being connected in popular tradition with the coronation of Saxon Kings known to have been performed there.

The stone is said to be a calcareous sandstone, and may one day be shown to be of the same formation with those of which Dr. Clarke speaks as found on the site of Beth-El.