

ART. IX.—*Notes on Carlisle Cathedral.* By Rev. C. M. LOWTHER BOUCH.

I. JOHN OF GAUNT AND THE EAST WINDOW.

IN a paper read to our Society in 1925 Dr. F. C. Eeles accepted the generally held view that John of Gaunt was governor of Carlisle castle and through this came to be depicted in the glass of the east window of the cathedral. He added however that its general appearance "suggests an earlier date (than 1380-84), but it is by no means impossible that it was not made till the time indicated" adding in his printed version "on the evidence of the glass above (the ancient glass over the north door of the nave) I should find it very difficult to accept the commonly received view that the date of the glass in the tracery of the east window is as late as about 1380." (These *Trans.* N.S. xxvi, 313, 317; in the last a misprint reads 18th century for 14th century).

It is here proposed to see if there are any solid grounds for accepting so late a date for the glass and connecting with it John of Gaunt (the two points are clearly interwoven). The origin of the connection of the window with the alleged governorship of John of Gaunt can be traced to a lecture on the east window given by Chancellor Ferguson in 1875 in which he stated "from 1380 to 1384 John of Gaunt was on the Border with full power to regulate all Border matters as the king's lieutenant on the marches of Scotland and in that capacity he held and doubtless resided in Carlisle Castle." (*Ibid.*, o.s. ii, 310). Later in a small book entitled *Carlisle Cathedral* the chancellor was less guarded and definitely stated that John of Gaunt was "governor of Carlisle from 1380-84" (p. 61) to which, in

the following year, the Misses R. A. and K. Henderson in "A Guide to Carlisle Cathedral" (p. 12) added the word "castle" to Carlisle. From then on this governorship has been accepted as a fact. The Chancery Enrolments however make it almost certain that John of Gaunt was not governor of Carlisle castle in any of these years.

Cumberland and the castle of Carlisle were committed to John Derwentwater late in 1380, to Amand Mouceux a year later and to Robert Parvyng in Nov., 1382 (Cal. Fine Rolls, 220, 269, 327). Elsewhere there are references to Richard le Scrope "keeper of Carlisle castle" in Feb., 1381 (Cal. Pat. Rolls, 604), and to its custody being in the hands of Roger de Clifford in May, 1382 and May, 1383 (Cal. Pat. Rolls 122, Cal. Close Rolls, 275), and of it being granted for life to Thomas de Clifford in Dec.-Jan., 1384-5 (Cal. Pat. Rolls, 527, 518).^{*} There is no evidence at all to support the idea that John of Gaunt held the castle in these years.

In the light of this and other evidence there can be no doubt the unguarded words of the Chancellor, unwisely amplified by the Misses Henderson have been responsible for an error which has been perpetuated down to our own day in almost all the popular literature on the cathedral as well as in our own *Transactions*.

What of the portrait in the east window which has so long been attributed to John of Gaunt? Referring to the supposed heraldic border around this Chancellor Ferguson said "it is ornamented alternately with golden castles and red lions' or leopards' faces executed with remarkable vigour. In heraldic language it would be described as a bordure of Castile and Leon being the heraldic insignia of those two kingdoms . . . We may now I think be safe

^{*} I am indebted to the Editor for these references. Early writers on this point might have taken caution from the fact that Jefferson makes no mention of John of Gaunt in his list of governors of the castle (Hist. and Antiquities of Carlisle 120).

in concluding that the crowned figure in the east window surrounded with the border of Castile and Leon must refer to John of Gaunt King of Castile and Leon (these *Trans.* o.s. ii, 308, 310). But the chancellor was mistaken about the red lions of Leon. The second and fourth quarters of Castile and Leon—as can be seen from the coat amongst the fourteenth century glass in the cathedral clerestory—is a blue lion on a silver field—which knocks the bottom out of his theory, and leaves no reason to believe that the individual depicted inside the window is John of Gaunt. The glass represents the last Judgement and the figure with which we are concerned is shown casting away his coffin lid which is marked with a cross. Some unwary individuals have seen in this cross the arms of the priory, but these are a plain cross, not a cross fleury—as is shown on the coffin lid—heraldically a very different thing. The alleged connection with Edward the Confessor is even more absurd and too illfounded to require refutation.

The Chancellor also states without giving any authority that the reason why the portrait was inserted was because of John of Gaunt's support of Prior William de Dalston in his famous quarrel with his bishop (*ibid.*, o.s. ii, 310). But, to judge from the full account of this given by Canon Wilson (V.C.H. Cumb., ii, 134), there is no record of John of Gaunt having intervened in this dispute.

Other historical evidence suggests the same conclusion. In the voluminous register of John of Gaunt recently published by the Camden Society (3rd Series, LVI, LVII), not a single one of the many letters belonging to the period 1379-83 is dated from Carlisle or indeed from anywhere on the western side of the Scottish Border. Indeed the only known link between John of Gaunt and Carlisle cathedral is the very non-committal one furnished by his coat of arms surviving *inter alia* in the glass of the clerestory (these *Trans.*, N.S. xxxiv, 23). But this only suggests

that he was one of several benefactors to the church and gives no grounds for connecting him with the east window or with the years 1380-4.

Archaeology supports the evidence of history. It is extremely doubtful whether the tracery or the glass of the east window can be assigned to so late a date as 1380-4. The character of the former suggests a time several decades earlier whilst so far as the latter is concerned Dr. Eeles some time ago suspected the glass was earlier than 1380 and now assigns to 1348-9. Unpublished evidence from Bishop Welton's Register suggests that the rebuilding of the chancel was planned and probably in progress in the third quarter of the century*

Thus it is apparent that there is no proof at all that John of Gaunt had any special connection with Carlisle cathedral and plenty that he was not governor of the castle from 1380-4. The whole story connecting him with the east window of the cathedral is a myth.

II. TWO NEWLY DISCOVERED COATS OF ARMS ON THE CHOIR SCREEN.

In the course of the recent removal of superfluous Victorian varnish from the choir screen two unsuspected coats of arms were revealed. Neither is noted by Dugdale in his survey of the heraldry of the cathedral made during his Visitation of 1665 (College of Arms MS. C 39 (2) p. 7. I am much indebted to Sir Alger Howard, K.C.V.O., Garter King at Arms, for this information), but one is mentioned by Samuel Jefferson in his *History and Antiquities of Carlisle* (1838, p. 116). The coats are on the inner or choir side of the vault of the main (western) entrance through the choir stalls and are each held in the hands of an angel.

* It is perhaps worth noting that John Salkeld in his will proved at Rose 20 Jan. 1358-9 bequeathed 100s. "fabrice ecclesie Abbathie Karl." and 40s. ad fabricacionem cuiusdam fenestre de novo in cancello ibidem (Testamenta Karleol.).—ED.

The first is quarterly; 1st and 4th grand quarters, quarterly, 1st and 4th an eagle displayed vert for Monthermer, 2nd and 3rd argent three fusils in fesse gules for Montagu; 2nd and 3rd grand quarters gules a saltire argent, a label of three points argent for Neville.

This must belong either to Richard, son of Ralph Neville, first Earl of Westmorland, or to two of Richard's sons. Richard was Ralph's eldest son by his second wife Joan Beaufort daughter of John of Gaunt and married Alice, daughter and sole heiress of Thomas Montagu 4th Earl of Salisbury. Because of this he often used the Monthermer-Montagu coat of this family as his first and principal coat. Of his children one was Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the "king maker" of history books—another was John Neville, Marquis of Montagu. Any of these three may have used with very slight differences the coat in question. Exactly which coat any of them normally used is not clear. Warwick is shown in the Rous Roll with 1 and 4 Montagu and 2 and 3 Monthermer on his shield, but on his seal he has Neville with a difference on his shield and the other coats on his horse's cloth. His father on his stall plate as knight of the Garter used the coat in the cathedral with Montagu and Monthermer in reverse quarters and the label compony argent and azure.

To which of the family must we ascribe the coat? Dugdale happily gives us the clue in his before-mentioned survey, noting the existence of a coat of Montagu and Neville "super maximam turrim castelli Karleolensis.* This must be the one mentioned by Jefferson in 1838 "over the entrance (of the keep of Carlisle castle) on the east side about midway between the battlements and the ground, is a shield containing the arms of Montagu and Monthermer, quarterly impaled with Neville . . . the same arms are over the entrance into the choir of the cathedral."†

* College of Arms MS. C 39 (2), p. 7.

† *op. cit.*, 116.

Of the three candidates the Earl of Salisbury was evidently Warden of the West Marches from 1420-39 and again in 1453 when his son the Kingmaker was associated with him. The former was perhaps also governor of Carlisle Castle in 1442. (H. Pease, *The Lords Wardens of the Marches of England and Scotland* p. 197). The Marquis of Montagu was also in Cumberland in 1461 when he relieved Carlisle (*The Paston Letters* ed. J. Gairdner, 1900 ii 13) and had been appointed chief steward of the bishop's castles for life (J. Wilson, *Rose Castle*, 136). His brother the Earl of Warwick was at Rose the next year (*ibid.* 47, from *Account Rolls in Diocesan Registry*). Both remained in the district for some time. Of the three Montagu is not known to have had any connection with the cathedral. Salisbury was on the Border for a much longer time than his son, so might seem the more likely. But it should be noted that the shield in the cathedral has a plain label of three points argent for difference while the Kingmaker used a label gabony argent and azure. Now it is a generally accepted heraldic rule that the plainer charge or difference represents the more senior member of a family which suggests that the cathedral shield is that of the father, Richard Nevill, K.G., Earl of Salisbury.

The second coat (on the left as one enters the choir) has 1 and 4 or, a lion rampant azure for Percy; 2 and 3 gules, three luces haurient argent for Lucy. This belongs to one of the Percy family, and almost certainly to William Percy, son of the second earl of Northumberland and bishop of Carlisle (1452-62). He is the only one of the family known to have had any connection with Carlisle at this time. It is true one would have expected the coat to show a difference, but this may well have been there originally and since vanished (both coats are now much faded and can only be seen with difficulty). It is expected that they will be repainted before long.

Shortly before the discovery of these shields some fine

carving was found on the vault of the western passage through the choir screen, the principal piece being a boss showing the Coronation of Our Lady by two angels; this retains a good deal of its original colour. Dr. Todd ascribed the choir screen and tabernacle to Bishop Strickland (1400-19) as well as the choir stalls which are undoubtedly his. (MS. History of the diocese of Carlisle, f. 53 in the library of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford. I am indebted to the Principal, Mr. A. B. Emden, for facilities to consult this MS.). But according to Nicolson and Burn, Prior Thomas Huthwaite "erected the bishop's throne in the quire on the back part whereof his name was inscribed" (ii, 303). Thomas occurs in 1457 (V.C.H. Cumb., ii, 151) so he was thus an exact contemporary of Bishop Percy (1452-62) and Richard Earl of Salisbury (d. 1460) and it seems likely that the choir screen may well belong to his time also. It is interesting to note that the Register of the Archdeacons of Richmond shows that appeals for money for new work at Carlisle cathedral were being made from 1443 to 1472 (Yorks Arch. Journ. xxx, 79, 99, 110, 137). In 1472 the appeal was for "the fabric and construction and happy consummation of the new work of the same church" and one wonders to what this alludes. Professor Hamilton Thompson in a letter to the writer suggests the possibility that a large scheme for reconstructing the west end of the nave was put in hand, all trace of which has been lost owing to its demolition in the seventeenth century. It is certainly clear that there was much more building at Carlisle cathedral during the troubled decades of the mid fifteenth century than has hitherto been suspected.