

ART. X.—*The Gondibour and Salkeld screens in Carlisle Cathedral.* By C. G. BULMAN.

Read at Carlisle, September 13th, 1955.

TO the ecclesiologist and the lover of mediæval art the cathedrals and churches of England provide an almost inexhaustible store of fittings and furnishings. The tolerant Anglican Reformation has left us with a mass of stall-work, screens, stained glass, tombs and other material of the very highest quality. Although admittedly there have been grievous losses due to fanaticism, ignorance and neglect, and even more perhaps to ill-advised "restoration", we still possess in our ancient churches more specimens of the work of the mediæval craftsman in wood, than some Roman Catholic countries like France, where, although there was no Reformation, the ignorance and lack of taste of the clergy in the 18th century swept away without regard or regret many fittings which were masterpieces of mediæval art, because they did not accord with the revived classical idiom fashionable in their day.

Despite the vicissitudes of Border warfare, fire, and disastrous "restorations" we still possess at Carlisle our splendid ranges of stalls with their tabernacle canopy-work of early 15th century date, and with the contemporary choir screen or "pulpitum" to the west. We have also two ranges of screen-work, the earlier being the screens round St. Catherine's chapel, installed by the industrious Prior Gondibour at the very end of the 15th century, and the later, that of Prior Lancelot Salkeld, dating from the early years of the 16th century. These two ranges of screen-work are the subject of the present article and I hope to show that the Salkeld screen, of early Renaissance design, is of the highest significance

and was erected to commemorate an event thought to be of vital importance to our Tudor ancestors. It is, on that account, possibly unique in England.

It will therefore be seen that by the greatest good fortune, we have in our cathedral, almost side by side, two sets of screen-work, one provided by Prior Gondibour (1484-1507) and the other the gift of Prior Salkeld. This latter cleric was the last prior and became the first dean. He was head of the chapter between the years 1532 and 1559, with a gap between 1548 and 1553, owing to his resignation and reappointment.

Only 25 years therefore separate the periods of rule of the two priors, but this quarter of a century was to prove momentous in English history. Between the dates of the erection of the two screens lie the twin peaks of the Reformation and the Renaissance, the two great events which provide the watershed of our cultural and political history. This history is writ large on the Salkeld screen, as I hope to show when we come to examine it in detail.

Before we look at the screens themselves, it is perhaps necessary to stress that it is completely insufficient to say that a particular fitting dates from such and such a period, or that it was erected by a particular bishop or abbot; unless we know something of the contemporary historic and cultural background, it is useless to attempt to understand any fitting or group of fittings. In her recent book, *Art in Mediæval France*, Dr. Joan Evans, F.S.A., writes: "We falsify history if we regard any kind of art as a series of specimens ranged in ecclesiastical museums, impersonal and without reason or background." That is well said. We must therefore examine the historical and cultural background before we look at the Carlisle screens themselves.

THE GONDIBOUR SCREENS.

These probably date from the 1490's and are of course purely mediæval in character. They are, alas, only a

remnant of much more extensive wood-work of similar type. According to R. W. Billings, *Historical Carlisle Cathedral* (1840), similar screens enclosed the choir, and in addition there was a new bishop's throne of the same date. All these lovely fittings were swept away in a disastrous "restoration" of the cathedral in the 1760's, under Bishop Lyttelton. Only the screens surrounding St. Catherine's chapel were allowed to remain and are still *in situ*.

The Historical Background.

Prior Gondibour was elected prior in 1484 and the succeeding year saw the battle of Bosworth (22 August 1485). The battle decided the fate of England; the last of the Plantagenets, Richard III, had perished on the battle-field, and the Tudors established themselves on the throne in the person of Henry VII. The miserable, long-drawn-out Wars of the Roses were finally ended, and with the strong rule of the business-like Henry, England enjoyed a period of security and with it prosperity.

Architecture responded to the political climate and the Tudor phase of our late Gothic art almost rivals the Flamboyant style of France in the richness of its ornament and detail. With peace and prosperity there was money to spend on architecture and the allied arts, and it cannot be by accident only that the canons of Carlisle under the rule of the energetic Prior Gondibour had money to spare just at this time for the embellishment of their church. We know that, apart from the screen-work, the whole interior of the choir was beautified with painting and gilding. A new bishop's throne was set up, the frater—the dining-hall of the canons—was completely rebuilt on a large scale, and the tithe barn nearby erected. So it must be assumed, I think, that Carlisle too must have benefited from the revival of trade under the secure and settled conditions inaugurated by the Tudors.

The Cultural Background.

It must be obvious of course, that the English wood-working schools had a long history behind them before they could design and produce masterpieces like the screen and canopy-work which abound in our ancient churches. Very little wood-work earlier than the 13th century survives and what remains is interesting more perhaps for its somewhat clumsy construction than for its design. The early efforts of the wood-workers were lithic in character, and attempts were made to imitate as far as possible the effects of the stone-masons, although the art of wood-working demanded a very different technique. As the 14th century advanced, the wood-workers and wood-carvers attempted wonderful translations of stonework designs into wood, incredibly difficult and wasteful in time and labour. The astonishing canopies to the stalls in Lancaster Priory church, for instance, must have been designed by a mason, but they were carried out in wood although the stone-mason's methods were employed. The mouldings used have almost enclosed hollows, which could be manipulated in stone, but which presented almost incredible difficulties in wood. These lovely canopies, filled with flamboyant traceries and encrusted with ornament, are the finest of their particular period and date from about 1340. They are illustrated in F. Bond, *Stalls and Tabernacle Work* (1919), and should be seen by anyone interested in our English church wood-work. Soon, however, the wood-workers developed a proper technique of their own, suitable to their material, and of a "mortice and tenon" character. By about 1370, the wood-worker came into his own and was no longer subordinate to the mason; transforming his material into light delicate, soaring canopy and screen-work. By the middle of the 15th century, it was the wood-worker who was influencing the mason in such work as the stone canopies to the choir screens of York, Canterbury, and Ripon.

The Screens.

Prior Gondibour's screens are purely mediæval in design (Plates I and II). They enclose the two open sides of St. Catherine's chapel and that to the west contains the door. Each screen consists of a panelled wainscot at the base carved with a linen-fold ornament. Immediately above is a series of perforated traceried panels; above these again is a plain string with a running traceried border on top. Rising above are the main standards of the screens, each standard having a detached pier in front, set diagonally and finished originally with a crocketed pinnacle; all of the latter have disappeared. These detached piers are connected to the main standards by a miniature flying buttress. The heads of the main divisions are filled with delicate tracery of very Flamboyant character and above is a coved string, finished with a pierced cresting of very intricate work on top. The whole is a very able and splendidly conceived design carried out with great skill. They have suffered some mutilation and have been restored in places, but in spite of all they remain among the loveliest screens to be seen anywhere. The rich and varied traceried panels demonstrate the inexhaustible invention of late-Gothic design. The flowing and Flamboyant designs are of truly "lace-like" character, and display a distinct and welcome change from the accepted designs of the late Perpendicular period, when the traceries of our English screens reflected the rather rigid patterns of the stone-masons' window tracery.

It is curious for the mediæval specialist to note that, despite the great length of the Perpendicular phase in English mediæval architecture (*c.* 1350-*c.* 1525) practically none of it appears in the cathedral at Carlisle, with the exception of the tower. The rebuilding of the east end, with its noble Curvilinear window, was prolonged beyond the 1350's into the Perpendicular period, but the masons obstinately rejected the new designs, and, fortun-

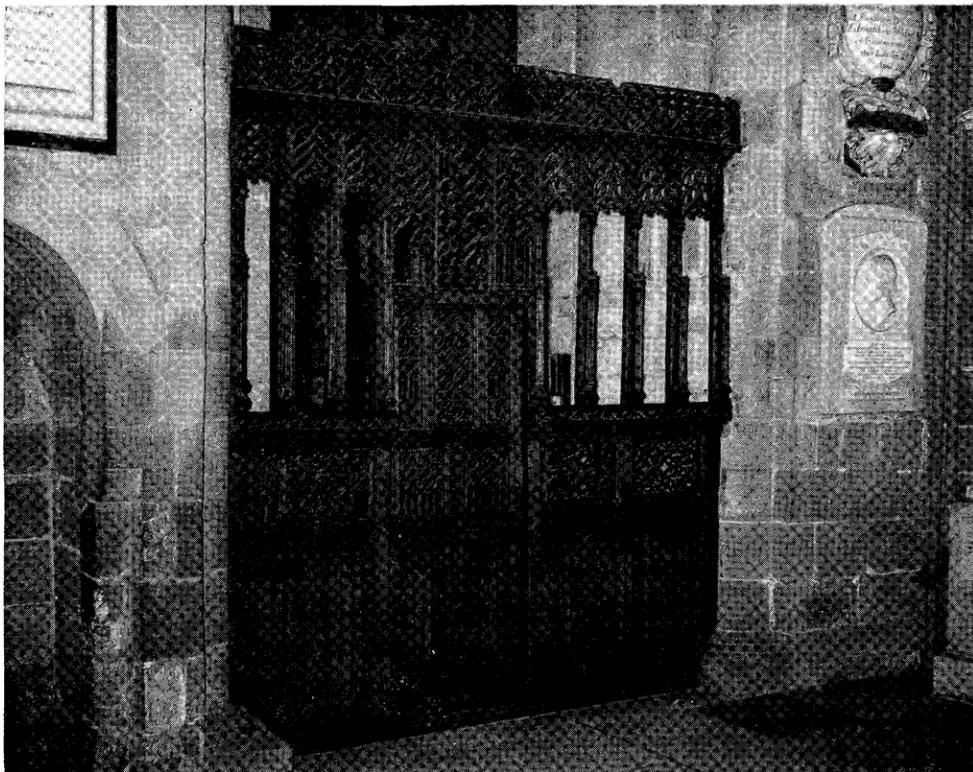


PLATE I.—Western Screen, with Door.

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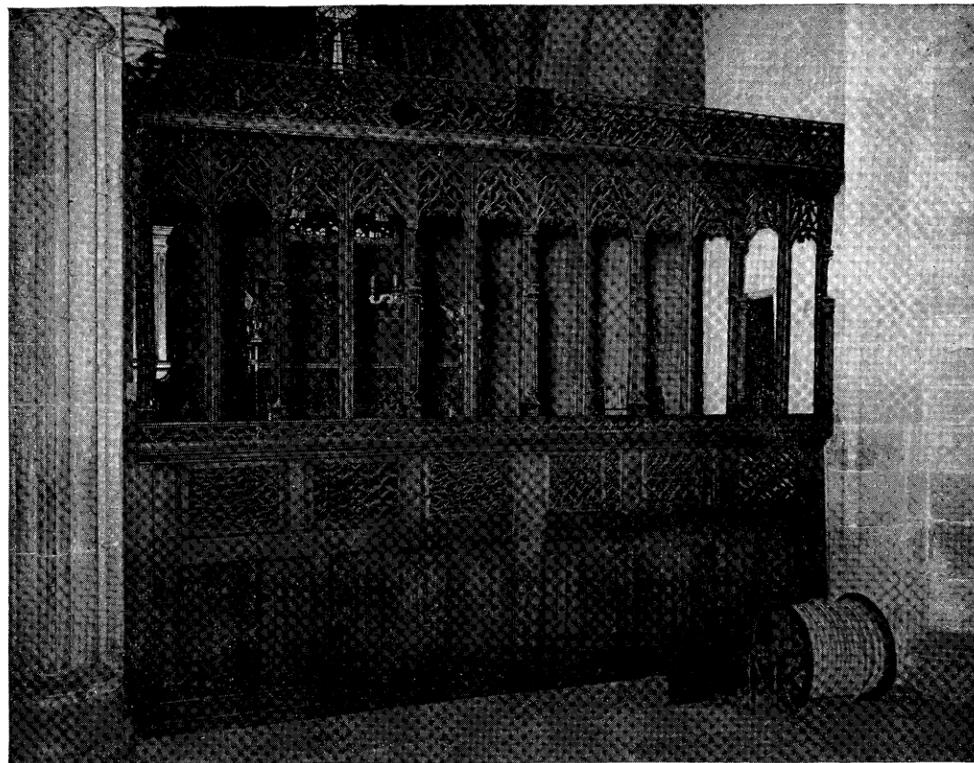


PLATE II.—Northern Screen.

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ately for us, carried out the whole of the east front in the purest Decorated style. At the very close of the mediæval period, the wood-workers who provided the Carlisle screens also rejected the Perpendicular idiom and designed their work with an astonishing profusion of curvilinear and flamboyant patterns. They reflect very strongly the influence of the French Flamboyant style, and one can only wonder what the influence was which produced wood-work of this type in the extreme north of England. It is perhaps significant that somewhat similar traceries, with the motif of overlapping arcs, appear on the famous wooden choir screen in Hexham Abbey. That house was also an Augustinian foundation, similar to Carlisle, and there must, we suppose, have been some communication between the two houses. The Hexham choir-screen appears to date from the time of Prior Thomas Smithson (1491-1524), a contemporary of Prior Gondibour's. Similar designs also appear on the parclose screen around Prior Leschman's chantry at Hexham (1491).

All this remarkable and lovely wood-work must have issued from the same workshop but where that was it is not easy at this distance of time to say. What we can state with certainty is that the screens are the product of shop work and professional craft gilds. A number of very competent wood-working firms existed in various parts of England; there was one centre at York where the business of wood-working was carried on for several generations by a firm called Drawswerd. There was another important centre at Ripon which carried out stall and canopy-work at Ripon Minster, Manchester collegiate church, and elsewhere. This firm was directed by a family called Bromflet (F. H. Crossley, "English church craftsmanship," *Brit. Arch. Assoc. Journ.* xxxii, 1941, 282 f.).

All these designs were, however, traditionally English, and far removed from the inspiration of the Carlisle and Hexham wood-work. We must note, at this point, that

Scottish art and architecture were much influenced by France owing to the long-standing and close political alliance between the two countries. It is known that at Melrose Abbey, the chapter ordered their stalls from Cornelius de Aelte, a citizen and master-carpenter of Bruges in Flanders, and there was some dispute between the two parties about the delay in completing the contract. In an agreement drawn up in October 1441, it was decided, among other things, to give Cornelius some allowance towards his journey from Bruges to Melrose, and to give him and his chief carver a safe-conduct for their journey to Scotland and return (Francis Bond, *Stalls and Tabernacle Work*, 1919). We have here evidence of the presence of foreign workmen not far beyond the Border. One might speculate whether the influence which created the design of the Carlisle wood-work came from north of the Border, although the usual state of the political relations between the two countries in mediæval times almost prohibits such a supposition. However, the Church at this time was supra-national and no doubt there were many ecclesiastical comings and goings across the Border.

The obvious thing then is to look northward to Scotland and examine the contemporary Scottish wood-work and try to find a parallel. Unfortunately this is not so easy as it sounds for almost the whole of the mediæval church fittings and furnishings were swept away at the Reformation or during the succeeding centuries. However, there is a little surviving wood-work and the comparison is both interesting and instructive. Part of a mediæval screen is preserved at Foulis Easter, Fife (illustrated in Moncrieff, *The Stones of Scotland*, 1938); this shows exactly the same type of linen-fold panelling in the lowest stages as at Carlisle, and the stage immediately above has pierced tracery panels as in the Gondibour screens. Much more important is the fine ancient wood-work in King's College chapel, Aberdeen. This dates from the

early years of the 16th century and is therefore almost contemporary with the Carlisle work. Here, at Aberdeen, stalls, canopies and screens have somewhat surprisingly survived, and the curvilinear and Flamboyant motifs in the tracery are similar to the Carlisle screen. Equally similar are the rectangular panels of each, filled with close-patterned traceries. There can be little doubt that they are both products of the same school of design, and it is to this Scottish-French or Scottish-Flemish school that we must look for the provenance of the Gondibour screens at Carlisle. It is entirely different from anything which was being produced by the English craftsmen at this time when the national Perpendicular style had abandoned flowing curves for the more sober straight line. The execution of the Aberdeen work is less skilful and less finished than that at Carlisle, and it may be that this work was executed by local craftsmen from foreign designs or under the supervision of a foreign master-carpenter.

Gathering together then such evidence as is now available, we must assume that there is the greatest possibility that not only the designs but the actual screens themselves at Carlisle came from north of the Border, directly from Scotland or more probably from Flanders, via Scotland. In fact, all the links in a chain of connection are complete. We have seen that the monks of Melrose Abbey obtained their stalls from a craftsman working in Bruges, and Melrose had important connections with our own abbey of Holm Cultram in Cumberland, the latter owning land on both sides of the Border and sometimes being regarded as an off-shoot from Melrose. We read that in November 1472 Richard, abbot of Melrose held a visitation in the abbey of Holm Cultram (*Prelates and People*, 131). During the episcopate of Bishop Bell, c. 1480 the abbot of Holm Cultram came to Rose Castle to receive the episcopal benediction (*Prelates and People*, 131). It is obvious from the foregoing that a definite link between

the clergy at Melrose and the clergy at Carlisle can be established, and it is easy to see how the Flemish wood-work at Melrose and the firm which made it became known to the prior and canons of Carlisle. In any case, the Gondibour screens are completely different in style and detail from the fine canopies erected somewhat earlier in the same century by Prior Huythuate (after 1433) above the canons' stalls; these follow closely the English tradition and are in line with the national development of canopy-work.

Whatever their provenance, the screens with which Prior Gondibour enriched the cathedral church are sure alike in their designing and technique. No signs or details of any kind appear to foreshadow the swiftly-coming transformation which was to revolutionise so completely all our traditional art. They are in the full flower of the late Gothic style, and we can only be very thankful that, despite the vandalism which destroyed so much of the screen-work, sufficient remains for us to appreciate and enjoy this lovely wood-work. The screens remain as a memorial to the conscientious prior who so beautified his cathedral church with such splendid examples of mediæval art, and whose initials, T.G. (Thomas Gondibour) appear on the tracery panels of the screen door to St. Catherine's chapel.

THE SALKELD SCREEN.

We must now turn our attention to the Salkeld screen on the north side of the choir. This is a work of surpassing interest, and although the reason for its erection is plainly visible upon it, the real significance of the screen has somehow hitherto been overlooked. First, however, as with the Gondibour screens, we must look to the historical and cultural background. The historical background will show us how the screen is bound up with the matrimonial adventures of Henry VIII.

The Historical Background.

Prior Gondibour's rule ended in 1507; two priors followed: Simon Senhouse and Christopher Slee, and then, in 1532, Lancelot Salkeld was elected prior. But already the settled mediæval scene had changed abruptly and was passing for ever. Even before Salkeld became prior, Henry VIII had, in February 1531 induced the convocation of clergy to acknowledge him as supreme Head of the Church. But this is to anticipate. To appreciate the inner significance of the screen, it is necessary to go back to 1399. In that fatal year the legitimate Plantagenet sovereign, the art-loving Richard II, whose arms appear in a window in the south aisle, was deposed and murdered by his cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke, earl of Lancaster. Bolingbroke proclaimed himself king as Henry IV and began the Lancastrian usurpation of the throne which was to lead directly in the course of another generation to the protracted Wars of the Roses. In this dynastic struggle, the rival Houses of York and Lancaster fought with alternating fortune and success for the possession of the crown, and it was not until August 1485, as stated earlier in this article, that the final battle was fought at Bosworth which established Henry Tudor on the throne of England and brought peace and prosperity to the distracted country. Henry Tudor's legal claim to the throne was of the slenderest kind. He is a somewhat enigmatic figure, whose character appears to defy analysis, but his strong, business-like rule and able statesmanship re-established peace and made the country prosperous. He died in April 1509, and was succeeded by his second son, also a Henry—his eldest son, Prince Arthur, having died as a youth.

The new king was a handsome, gifted youth of barely 18 years of age and he had been carefully educated with a view to his becoming a churchman. Providence willed otherwise, and he became known to posterity as Henry VIII.

His elder brother, Prince Arthur, had been married in the year 1501, at the age of 15 years, to Catherine of Aragon, the daughter of the Spanish sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella. All too soon, in April 1502, the youthful bridegroom had died, it is said of the plague, and was buried in Worcester cathedral. The young widow, Catherine, became dowager princess of Wales, and found herself in a dubious position. Her parents were anxious to retain the English alliance, and the grasping Henry VII was determined to retain Catherine's rich dowry. A solution satisfactory to both parties was found in the betrothal of the young widow to Henry, the brother of her first husband. As the proposed marriage was within the prohibited degrees of affinity, a dispensation from the Papacy was applied for. The necessary Bull of dispensation was obtained from Pope Julius II and the formal betrothal of the young pair, on 25 June 1503, was solemnised by proxy. From the very beginning doubts were expressed as to the legality of the marriage, and Warham, the archbishop of Canterbury, was against it. On attaining his 14th year, young Henry repudiated the contract, and while his father lived the marriage never took place. However, on the death of the old king, and almost immediately after his accession to the throne in April 1509, Henry married Catherine. He was almost 18 and she was nearly 24.

Catherine was to prove an excellent wife to the king in every way but one, and that exception was to prove fatal to her hold on the queenship. Within five years of the marriage she had borne five children, only one of whom had survived for as long as two months. When in February 1516, a healthy child was born it proved to be a female child, later to reign as Queen Mary Tudor. Each following year made it more and more evident that Catherine would never produce a prince to ensure the continuation of the Tudor dynasty, and Henry became acutely aware of the perils which might result to the king-

dom should no legitimate male heir be forthcoming. He even had his illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, created duke of Richmond, a title reminiscent of that borne by the king's father, and appointed to high office, and given precedence over his legitimate half-sister, Mary. It almost appeared as though he was preparing to nominate his natural son as heir to the throne, should no legitimate male heir be born to him.

The Tudors' legal claim to the crown was of the slightest and, failing a male heir, the succession could very easily become once again the prey of contending parties. The miserable Wars of the Roses were only a generation or so behind, and the possibility of a new struggle must have been uppermost in the minds of thinking men. A kingdom without an heir portended a kingdom without a king and the whole country must have been as anxious as Henry himself about the succession. True, there was the Princess Mary, but what woman had ever sat on the throne of England or worn the English crown? The precedent of Queen Maud was not encouraging.

So doubts as to the legality of his marriage began to raise themselves in Henry's mind. He passionately desired a legitimate son to succeed him on the throne and ensure the succession of the Tudor dynasty and also the peace of England. There must have been many people who doubted the legality of his marriage, and so the possibility of a divorce or annulment began to be discussed. It is not necessary to go into the problems and difficulties which arose; Henry himself complicated the issue by his infatuation for Anne Boleyn. In the autumn of 1528, Cardinal Campeggio arrived from Rome, empowered, jointly with Cardinal Wolsey, to try the question of the legality of Henry's marriage. Efforts were made to persuade Catherine to retire to a nunnery and so solve the problem, but this she resolutely refused to do.

In the end the divorce suit was revoked to Rome by the order of the pope, Clement VII, and this step resulted

in the disgrace and fall of the great Cardinal Wolsey. Henry then began the successive steps which finally resulted in the breach with Rome. In January 1531 Henry induced the convocation of clergy to proclaim him Supreme Head of the Church, and this step was confirmed by parliament at the end of 1534.

The pope was in a dire dilemma over the whole question. His enemies were at the gates of Rome and he was completely in the power of the Emperor, Charles V, who happened also to be the nephew of Catherine. Charles prompted the pope to refuse Henry any favourable decision to his suit for a divorce, and so Henry took the measures which resulted in the final breach with Rome. The Act against Appeals (1534) had provided that the decision for spiritual suits should lie not in Rome but in Canterbury. The same year saw the Spanish marriage declared null from the beginning by the new archbishop, Cranmer, and the king's second marriage to Anne Boleyn, valid. Anne was then crowned queen of England.

In September 1533, she gave birth to a child, but to Henry's vast disappointment it proved to be another girl, not the ardently expected heir of England. The new princess was christened Elizabeth; she was later to reign as perhaps the greatest of the Tudor dynasty and also as one of the greatest of our sovereigns. Nevertheless, Henry's disappointment was so great that he appears to have begun to lose his affection for his new queen. Whatever the reason, Anne did not survive long; within three years she was in the Tower of London, accused of misconduct and other crimes which were probably false, and in May 1536 she was beheaded.

Within a month of Anne's execution, Henry had married again; this time to Jane Seymour, a member of an old Wiltshire family. In October of 1537, the news was disseminated that "the Queen's grace hath been delivered of a goodly Prince the most joyful news that hath come to England these many years." The joy of

King Henry at the arrival of the passionately longed-for male heir was unbounded; Te Deums were sung in St. Paul's and other churches and great rejoicings took place through the whole of England. The new prince was born on the Vigil of St. Edward and was given the name of Edward. Within a fortnight of his birth, his mother died and Henry was again a widower.

This historical background to the screen has perhaps taken a long time to describe and the patient reader might well ask, "What has all this to do with the Salkeld Screen?" The answer is that the screen is a memorial to commemorate the infant Edward, the long-awaited Tudor heir, who was to ensure the succession to the throne and avert the threat of a reversion to domestic strife and chaos.

The Cultural Background.

Prior/Dean Salkeld's screen is of early Renaissance design and it is possible that he removed an earlier screen of Gondibour's in order to insert this new work to commemorate the new Tudor prince of Wales, so important did the event seem. No doubt he could have obtained, at this date, some fine new wood-work of traditional mediæval English design, but the occasion appeared to our Tudor ancestors to be of such over-riding importance that nothing could be good enough to mark it but some production of the new art, the Renaissance, which was just then making its entry into England.

The traditional "Gothic" art of northern Europe, so vital and vigorous in all its original impulses and ideals, had passed through various phases, and signs were not wanting by the beginning of the 16th century that a decadence had set in. From France, perhaps the "classic" home of Gothic art, the style had spread in all directions through Europe, taking upon it various national characteristics in varying lands. But although it penetrated into Italy it was never at home there; the great traceried windows and soaring vaults were foreign to a land where

it was more necessary to exclude sunlight than to admit it. With so many examples of ancient Roman art still remaining, art and architecture in Italy inevitably returns to classic models. The new Renaissance art, born in Italy, embraced architecture as well, and as early as 1420 Brunelleschi was designing buildings in a revived classic style. From then onwards many famous buildings in the great Italian towns were erected in the Renaissance style. In 1494, the French king, Charles VIII invaded Italy in order to pursue his slender claim to the throne of Naples; he occupied Turin and Pisa and visited Florence and Rome. Naples was entered and occupied, but his retreat to France was cut off and he had to fight his way back. Charles was charmed with the climate and the high state of civilization which he found in Italy, and he, together with his nobles, brought back from the Italian campaigns a train of Italian artists and forty tons of Italian works of art. Later kings, Louis XII (1498-1515) and Francis I (1515-1547), followed suit. From then onwards the progress of Renaissance art in France was rapid, and a definite change from Gothic to Italian designs is evident, at first only in details. Very soon French artists began to learn from the Italian visitors and by 1525, French craftsmen had learned to copy and design in the Italian manner.

The new culture was brought into England by the courtiers who accompanied Henry VIII on his French campaigns, and Henry himself summoned Italian artists to England. The earliest true Renaissance work to survive in England is the tomb of Margaret Beaufort, Henry's grandmother, in Westminster Abbey; it was begun in 1511 by the sculptor Pietro Torrigiano, a native of Florence. Probably the final change over from Gothic to Renaissance in the decorative arts, at least in official circles, can be assigned to the year 1520 (cf. J. Lees-Milne, *Tudor Renaissance*). This was the year of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold", when the French and

English sovereigns met near Calais and tried to outdo each other in pomp and splendour. Even so it was not until the year 1542 that Henry allowed his great seal to be stamped with a design in the new style. Thus the new art from Italy made its way into England, finally displacing (after a transitional period) the long-established traditional Gothic style; by the accident of a patriotic impulse on the part of the priory at Carlisle, an important and lovely screen in the new style found its way to the remote cathedral at Carlisle on the uttermost confines of the kingdom.

THE SCREEN.

Let us now examine the screen in detail. The scheme consists of three rectangular compartments, the door being the middle one. The bottom member in each compartment is a solid wainscot carved with roundels on the north side, and diamond-shaped panels on the south side, each roundel or diamond containing the not unusual early Renaissance motif of human heads in profile.

The middle compartment is the tallest and is open, and by a distant echo of the Gothic style it exhibits a kind of "tracery", consisting of stylised dolphins. The mullion supporting them is deeply moulded and set diagonally. Above is a somewhat heavy and solid frieze carved with scroll-work and bearing shields and heraldic devices on each side. The whole is surmounted by open-work brattishing forming a kind of pediment to each compartment, each "Pediment" enclosing a shield. The three main compartments are separated by tall slender columns carved to represent "candelabra". The classic cornice appears immediately above and below the frieze.

The heads in the lowest stage are of the greatest interest and are in pairs, facing each other, in each compartment. They are in bold relief, competently and cleverly carved. The details of the screen are as follows:

SOUTH SIDE.

Wainscot (The Heads, left to right).

1. A female head, with head-dress.
2. A male head, wearing a helmet with the visor raised; he has a pronounced hook nose, and a beard; a very remarkable head.
3. A youth wearing a period hat.
4. A youth wearing a period hat.
5. A female head, with head-dress.
6. A male head, wearing a fanciful kind of "turban" head-dress, and a beard.

Frieze.

Left compartment: floral scroll with intertwined letters, "L.S., D.K." These of course stand for Lancelot Salkeld, dean of Carlisle.

Centre compartment: shield bearing the arms of the priory of Carlisle, surrounded by cornucopias, or torches, with issuing floral scrolls.

Right compartment: "L.S." in centre (for Lancelot Salkeld), surrounded by floral scrolls which end in grotesque dragon heads.

Brattishing.

Left: shield displaying the Crown of Thorns, with crossed nails above and spear below, all combined to form a formal group.

Centre: a shield bearing the sacred monogram "I.H.S." surrounded by the Royal "garter" motif; the shield is supported by grotesque beasts, the winged dragon on the left and the greyhound on the right.

Right: shield with the "five wounds" motif displayed. Pierced hands at top, pierced feet below, pierced heart in the centre; a most unusual device and very boldly and magnificently carved in high relief.

It will be noticed that all this southern side of the screen, towards the choir, is entirely given over to ecclesiastical and devotional devices.

NORTH SIDE.

Wainscot (Left to right).

1. A female head with contemporary type of head-dress.
2. A male head with long moustache and curly hair.
3. Negro head with well-carved woolly hair and globular earring.
4. A female head with fantastic head-dress.

5. A female head with curious "ear-phone" ornaments, connected to each other by a cord passing below the chin.
6. Elderly man in contemporary hat, with bushy beard and moustaches.

Frieze.

Left compartment: shield in centre displaying large single fleur de lys, surrounded by floral scrolls ending in grotesque heads.

Centre compartment: shield in centre displaying "prince of Wales'" feathers, and surrounded by floral scrolls ending in grotesque heads.

Right compartment: shield displaying Tudor rose, surrounded by floral scrolls ending in grotesque heads.

Brattishing.

Left: shield bearing "prince of Wales'" feathers above a scroll bearing the mysterious letters "G.S.P.E."; surrounding the scroll are carved radiating rays.

Centre: the Royal Arms (France modern quartering the leopards of England). The shield is surrounded by the emblem of the Garter, bearing the motto, "Honi Soi Qui Mal Y Pense." The Royal Arms are supported by grotesque beasts, the dragon on the left and the greyhound on the right. These are the official Tudor heraldic beasts, the red dragon of Wales to claim descent from the fabled King Arthur, the greyhound from Henry VII's queen, Elizabeth of York.

Right: A similar shield to that on the left, again with the letters "G.S.P.E."

It will be noticed that all the heraldry and devices on the north side of the screen are Royal and secular.

What then is the meaning of all this display of heraldry, badges and devices? Gathering all the evidence together and assembling it against the historical and cultural background detailed previously I find that the screen is a memorial to commemorate the child Edward, son of Henry VIII, the Tudor prince of Wales, whose birth was to avert the danger of a disputed succession and who was to reign for six brief years as Edward VI. The prince of Wales's feathers, three times repeated, the Tudor rose, and above all the mysterious letters "G.S.P.E." which can only mean "God Save Prince Edward", all point to one inevitable conclusion.

The screen as a whole shows plainly the ecclesiastical and secular history prevailing at the time of its execution. Henry VIII was proclaimed Supreme Head of the Church by Convocation in January 1531. Prior Salkeld was not elected prior until 1532, but together with the remainder of the English clergy he must already have accepted the Royal Supremacy, and this must be one of the earliest examples displayed in a church. On the other hand, Henry's breach with Rome involved no doctrinal changes, and his Six Articles Act (1539) was expressly directed against the new "heresies" then spreading among his subjects. The ecclesiastical devices on the south side of the screen show that all the old dogmas held good despite the priory's acceptance of Henry's Headship of the Church. Prior Salkeld had obviously no love of the new doctrines, for although he was prepared to accept the king as the Head of the Church, he resigned in 1548, rather than accept the doctrinal changes promulgated after the accession of Edward VI in 1547. He was reinstated in 1554 after Mary Tudor had become queen and a religious reaction had taken place, and died in 1560.

The screen can now be dated with some certainty to the years between 1537, when the child Edward was born, and 1548 when Prior Salkeld resigned. The date might even be narrowed a little, for the priory was dissolved in January 1540 and was refounded in May 1541. Had Salkeld been prior as well as dean, as under the old foundation, the "P" as well as "D" might have appeared with his initials; only the "D" for Decanus appears, and so we might suppose that the screen was erected after the date of the new Foundation in 1541 but before 1548, when Salkeld resigned. We might suggest a date about the years 1541-1545 and probably nearer 1541.

So far as I know, the only other screen which bears the device of Edward VI, as prince of Wales, is at Bristol; curiously enough another cathedral church of the Augustinian order, similar to Carlisle. At the Dissolution, the

stone screen of the "White Friars" church at Bristol was seized in May 1538 and was eventually bought by Thomas White, a merchant and prominent citizen. By his will, dated 1542, he left the said pulpitum to the newly constituted cathedral. The screen was in due course erected, with some additions, in the cathedral about 1543. The new features were two heraldic devices: viz. the Royal Arms of Henry VIII on the north side of the door-head, and the arms of Prince Edward on the south, displaying a coronet and prince of Wales's feathers, between the initials "P" and "E" (cf. Aylmer Valence, *Greater English Church Screens*). It was these two initials which gave me the clue to the mysterious initials which appear on the Salkeld screen and which had baffled me for a long time. The "P" and "E" for Prince Edward appears as the last two letters of "G.S.P.E." on the Salkeld screen, and once that was established, the rest was easy. Unfortunately the Bristol screen was demolished in 1860, although parts of it remain.

The last and perhaps the most interesting question remains. Who designed and executed the Carlisle screen? As with the Gondibour screens there can now be no certainty, but we can be sure that it was not made here in the north country, for there is little doubt that the local traditional building crafts and decorative arts continued on their way for a long time yet, completely undisturbed by the slightest breath of the Renaissance. We might instance the tower which Bishop Kytte built at Rose Castle just at this time; he was bishop of Carlisle 1521-1537, and his tower at his episcopal residence still survives. It is wholly Tudor and traditional in style, with mullioned windows as is the manorial hall at Hornby near Penrith (c. 1550). As late as 1631, very creditable Gothic was being built at Hutton in the Forest Hall and we might also instance Greenthwaite Hall, near Greystoke, as late as 1650.

Our screen at Carlisle is, I think, unique, and I do not

know of another single instance of developed Renaissance detail of so early a date in the north of England. As stated above, Prior/Dean Salkeld and his fellow canons seem to have been determined that the screen with which they wished to commemorate the Tudor heir should be of the best and newest design possible. The old traditional style was apparently not considered good enough and it would appear to be probable that they even removed a previous screen by Prior Gondibour in order to insert their new one. It is impossible to think that any local carver or artist had sufficient knowledge and technical skill to design and execute the new details, even supposing that they had seen some of the new designs. Who the artists were we cannot even guess, but we could suppose that one of the Italian artists imported into England immediately before the break with Rome was asked to design the new work, the various motifs, badges and heraldry being suggested by the clients, i.e. the priory, the whole contract being carried out in London.

An alternative theory has occurred to the author which is attractive and equally possible. We have seen that the slightly older Gondibour screens were quite possibly designed and executed outside of England, not in Scotland, but overseas in Flanders. That particular wood-working school was probably still in operation, but now devoting itself to designs and creations in the new Renaissance manner with Classic idioms instead of the old traditional Gothic style, now outmoded. The way having been opened by the contract for the Gondibour screens, what more likely than that the same workshop should be entrusted with the contract for the new work? One feature common to the two screens is the mullion set diagonally and not too dissimilar in appearance. There is also the faint echo of Gothic design in the curious "tracery" of the Salkeld screen, as though the designer still thought in terms of Gothic tracery despite the revolution in design. The progress of the Renaissance on the

Continent was always ahead of its progress in England, and the details on the screen are well-developed. There is also the fact that there is an exuberance and display of fancy in the various scrolls and details on the screens which are perhaps a little foreign to the sober English imagination, some of them verging on the grotesque. There is an astonishing variety too in the details for no two of the many floral scrolls are alike, the ornaments on the slender pillars between the compartments are different, and so are all the large finials on the summit of the screen. The variety and fertility of invention displayed approximates to that shown on the mediæval screens of Prior Gondibour but translated into a different style. With only a few decades between the provenances of the two screens the name of the firm which provided the earlier screens must have been known to the canons. We can say with certainty that the screens are foreign in conception; it is not impossible that they proceeded from the same source.

A clue to the connection between the Gondibour and Salkeld screens may possibly be found in the ancient tracery panels now in the prior's room at the deanery.

Above the fireplace there are six panels of mediæval design, now worked up with modern wood-work to form an overmantel (illustrated in CW.2 vii 192). These panels appear to be some remnants of Prior Gondibour's wood-work, spared from the disastrous restoration of the 1760's, and they are shown in R. W. Billings' *History of Carlisle Cathedral* (1840) attached to the Salkeld screen, although they obviously do not belong there. Each panel is approximately 2 ft. 8 in. high by 1 ft. 2 in. wide, and shows a crocketed ogee arch, divided into two "lights"; the portion of the panel above the arch being filled with delicate close-patterned tracery of flamboyant design, almost identical with the tracery in the screen-work round the Leschman chantry tomb at Hexham. The design of these panels is un-English but

matches the Gondibour screens in general feeling. At first glance the panels are thoroughly Gothic in inspiration, but closer examination shows that the central mullion and the main arches are somewhat barbarously carved with what looks to be an attempt at an "egg-and-tongue" ornament—a classic innovation—placed continuously across the mullion and arch mouldings. This suggests that while the Gondibour wood-work was being carved in the closing years of the 15th century, the designers became aware of the new Renaissance motifs and, wishing to be in the fashion, carved this classic detail, with little understanding, on the mouldings of the Carlisle wood-work. It is completely out of the question that this could have been done in any English workshop at this early date, and so it can be assumed that the Gondibour wood-work did indeed proceed from sources overseas. It helps us to understand too, how the particular workshop, gradually abandoning the mediæval style, could change over to Renaissance motifs, and in the course of a decade or two, produce a screen like the Salkeld screen, the traditional Gothic art having by then been gradually abandoned.

Finally, we may note that the early Renaissance style was not allowed to develop in England, but was speedily cut short by the Reformation. The foreign artists, whether French or Italian, were either expelled or driven away by fear of persecution. As this earliest phase of the Renaissance in England was so exceedingly transient and produced so little, we ought to realise how extraordinary it is that a screen of such well-developed Renaissance type should appear in so remote a place as Carlisle. When the religious upheaval had settled down again to some extent, after the middle of the 16th century, it was domestic work which was required, not ecclesiastical. There is not, therefore, very much of this ecclesiastical work of early Renaissance design in all England, and what there is of it is situated chiefly in London and

the south. The patriotic fervour of Prior/Dean Salkeld at Carlisle brought to his cathedral church this exotic screen which must have excited the wonder of his contemporaries, for otherwise the traditional native art went on its way for several generations more, oblivious of and undisturbed by the revolution in art which had already begun.

To conclude, we may remark the pleasant and remarkable coincidence whereby it was a bishop of Carlisle, Thomas Merks, who protested against the deposition and murder of the unfortunate Richard II in 1399 and foretold that civil war would follow. Here, in his cathedral church, nearly a hundred and fifty years later, we have a screen set up to commemorate the birth of a prince of Wales whose coming was to avert a return to that civil strife which stemmed originally from the deposition of Richard of Bordeaux.