

THE SCULPTURE GALLERY, LOWTHER CASTLE, PENRITH, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: Lowther Castle and Gardens Trust

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Non-Technical Summary

Following the submission of a planning application for a programme of conservative repair and redevelopment at Lowther Castle, Penrith, Cumbria, a condition was placed by Lake District National Park Authority requiring an archaeological building recording to be undertaken of the sculpture gallery. Lowther Castle, of which the sculpture gallery forms part, is Grade II* Listed. The building recording was carried out on 21st and 22nd November 2011.

The extant but ruinous remains of Lowther Castle largely belong to the third main phase of rebuilding to have taken place on the site, dated to the first decade of the 19th century. Preceding this is a original medieval castle, now completely lost, and a late 17th century rebuild, which was largely destroyed by fire in 1718. The sculpture gallery is situated at the junction between the early 19th century building and remaining elements of the service wing for the late 17th century house, which were incorporated into the third rebuilding. The principal elements comprising the sculpture gallery were evidently created during the early 19th century, although it seems to have been at least reconfigured in the 1860s to take on its later role. Documentary records list the antiquities held in the gallery in some detail, although there are various gaps. It is apparent that there were over 90 pieces of sculpture with continental origins, many of which were acquired from existing collections. In addition, there was a substantial collection of locally acquired pieces of sculptured stone and inscriptions, many taken from Roman sites in the county as part of deliberate programmes of investigation and acquisition instigated by the 2nd Lord Lonsdale. Amongst these is an important group from Kirkby Thore, and a collection of early medieval cross fragments from the church yard at Lowther, as well as many others that are potentially not previously recorded.

Unfortunately, phasing the development of this section of the building is hampered by viewing it effectively in isolation from the rest of the castle, but nevertheless it is possible to identify a number of phases of development, which can be dated in relative detail on account of the extensive historical information that is available about the site. The earliest section is the north part of the east wall, which comprises the remains of part of the late 17th century service wing, with its blocked muillion and transome windows still intact. The majority of the structure belongs to the rebuilding of the early 19th century, while there are smaller periods of alteration from the late 19th and early 20th century, one of which related to the 'creation' of the sculpture gallery in its later form and included the setting of sculpture and inscribed fragments directly into the wall of the north end of the gallery. In addition, the examination of the documentary sources and evidence from within the building itself have provided a rare opportunity to consider the original contents of the sculpture gallery and their potential significance. It is recommended that further specialist photography of the impression of an inscription still present in one of the niches in the wall of the gallery.

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The building recording was carried out by Tom Mace and Dan Elsworth, who co-wrote this report. The figures were produced by Tom Mace. The report was edited by Jo Dawson and the project was managed by Dan Elsworth.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Following the submission of a planning application (Ref. 7/2010/3091) for a programme of conservative repair and redevelopment at the Grade II* Listed Lowther Castle, Penrith, Cumbria (NGR 352282 523816), a condition was placed by Lake District National Park Authority requiring an archaeological building recording to be undertaken of the sculpture gallery. The building recording was carried out on 21st and 22nd November 2011.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Lowther Castle is located inside the north-eastern edge of the Lake District on the east side of the River Kent in the Lowther Valley approximately two kilometres west-north-west of Hackthorpe at approximately 215m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2002). The sculpture gallery forms a corridor along the west side of the west stable block on the castle courtyard (Figure 1). The corridor is aligned north-north-west/south-south-east, but it is described as being north/south for ease of recording throughout this report.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area comprises Dinantian Carboniferous limestone covered by glacial till (Moseley 1978, plate 1). The landscape is characterised by large expanses of moorland and rolling upland farmland with limestone outcrops (Countryside Commission 1998, 56).

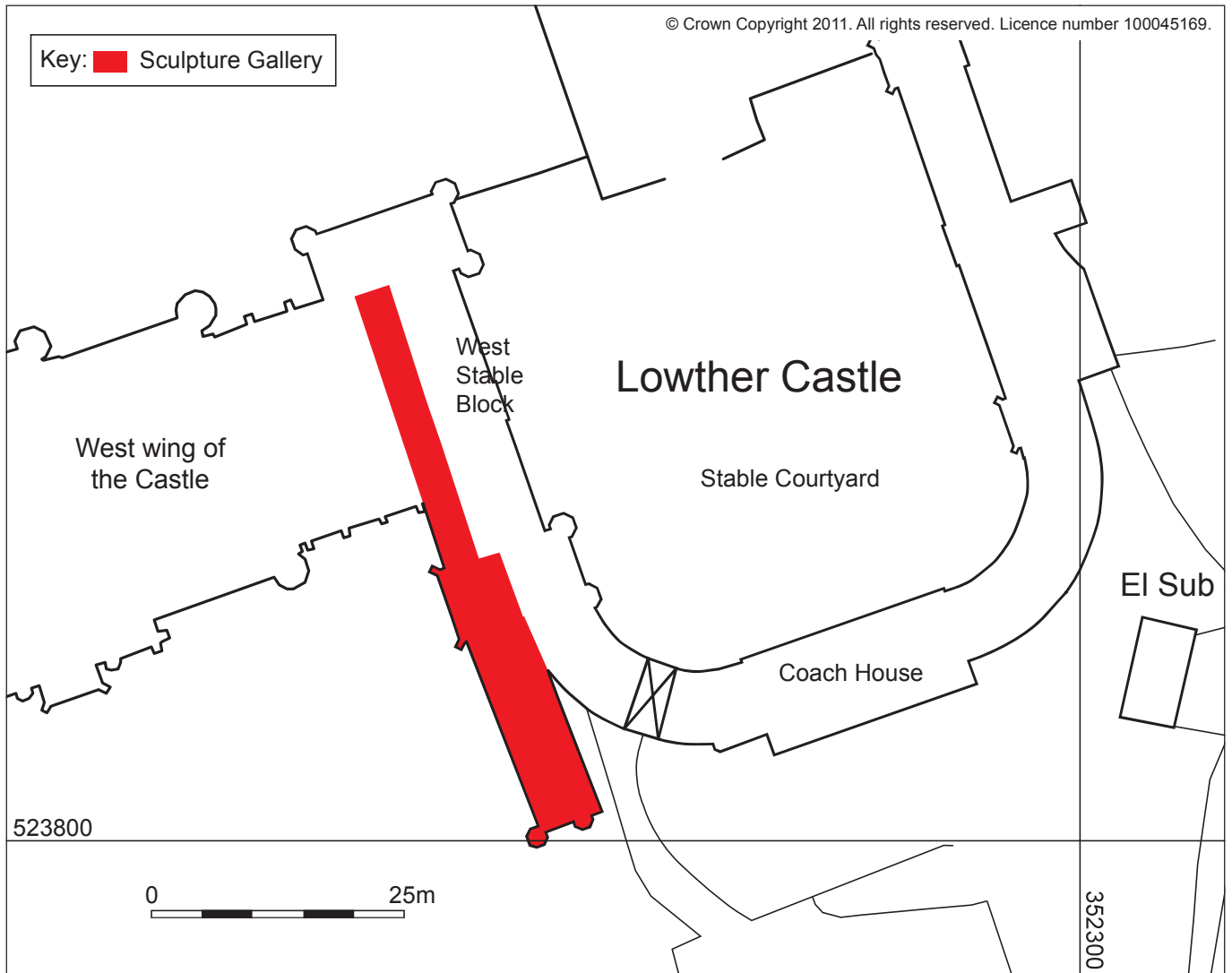
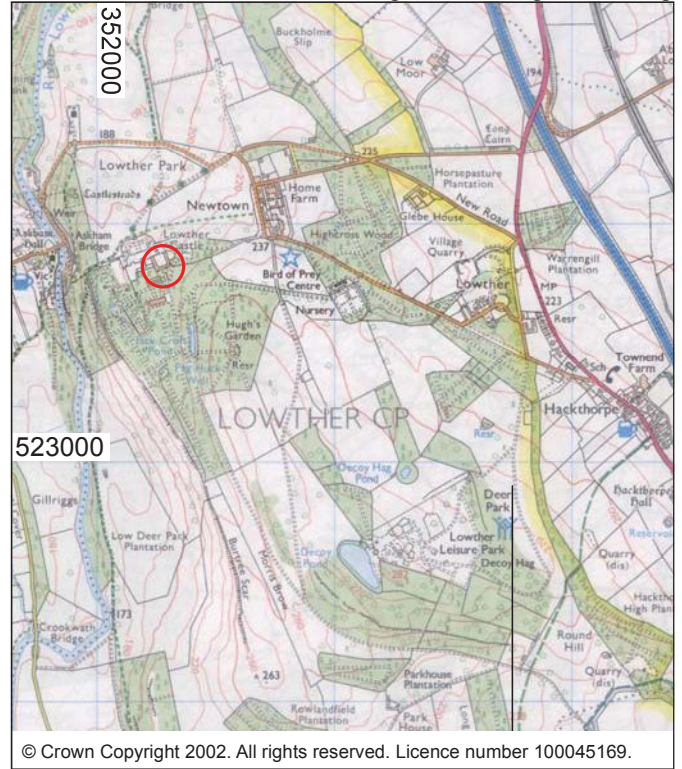
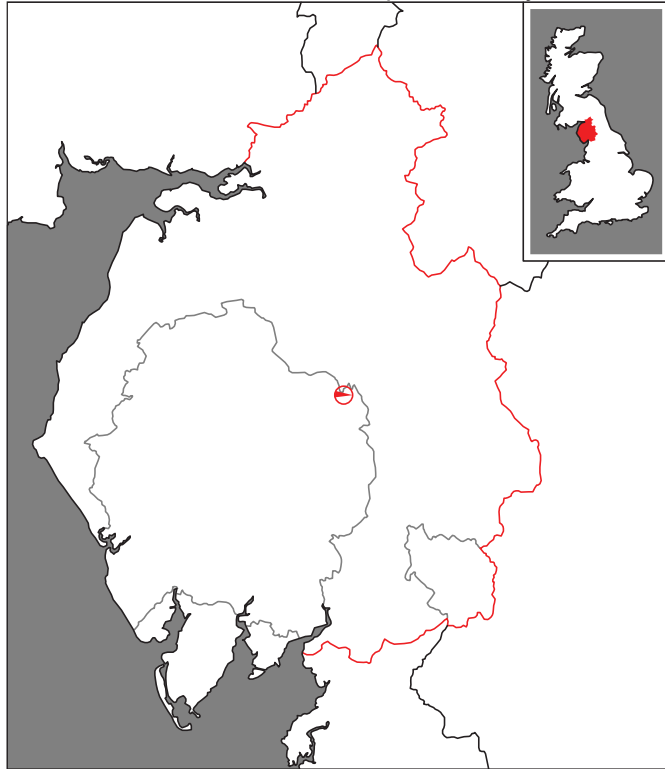


Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The building investigation comprised three separate elements intended to provide a suitable record of the structure in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006) and the guidelines of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a). In addition, a desk-based assessment was carried out, in accordance with the project design and IfA guidelines (IfA 2008b), and a suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent paper record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 A number of sources of information were used during the desk-based assessment:

- **Lake District National Park Authority Historic Environment Record (HER):** an extensive amount of previous historical and archaeological work has been carried out at Lowther Castle and the HER was consulted in order to consult the reports relating to this previous work;
- **Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle (CRO(C)):** this was visited in order to examine original documents, principally those specifically relating to the sculpture gallery;
- **Cumbria Record Office, Kendal (CRO(K)):** this was visited in order to examine further primary and secondary sources relating to the site;
- **Kendal Local Studies Library:** additional secondary sources were consulted relating to specific aspects of the site;
- **Greenlane Archaeology library:** additional secondary sources were used to provide information for the site background.

2.3 Building Recording

2.3.1 It was intended that a building recording be carried out to English Heritage Level-4 type standards (English Heritage 2006), although as conditions on site and the problems of recording only part of a much larger building to this level made this effectively impossible recording closer to Level-2/3 was carried out, with more detailed recording in areas of particular interest or significance. Level 2/3 is still a detailed form of investigation intended to record the form, function and phasing of the building, incorporating the results of the desk-based assessment. It comprised three types of recording:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs:** photographs in both 35mm colour print and colour digital format were taken of the main features of the building, its general surroundings, and any features of architectural or archaeological interest. A watching brief carried out at the site prior to the building recording (Greenlane Archaeology forthcoming a) provided the opportunity for an impromptu site visit on 25th August 2011 and some digital photographs of the building were also taken at this time, before some of the scaffolding was in position for the restoration of the roof at the south end of the gallery and when some of the first floor elements which were no longer accessible at the north end could still be accessed. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report, and the remaining photographs are in the project archive;
- **Drawings:** drawings were produced by hand-annotation of printed plots of 'as existing' drawings provided by the client's architect. The drawings produced ultimately comprised:
 - i. a plan of the ground floor at a scale of 1:100;
 - ii. external elevations at a scale of 1:100;
 - iii. an internal elevation of a section of the passage at a scale of 1:20;

- iv. detailed drawings of details of historical interest at a scale of 1:1.

2.4 Archive

2.4.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design and current IfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Record Office in Carlisle on completion of the project. Paper copies of this report will be provided for the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) Historic Environment Record (HER) as required, one with the client, a digital copy with the client's agent, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition a digital record of the project will be made on the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

3. Desk-Based Assessment

3.1 Background History

3.1.1 **Introduction:** several previous historical investigations have been undertaken at Lowther Castle, in particular an extensive conservation plan (The Landscape Agency 2002) and historical map analysis (Land Use Consultants 2010), and much of the information that follows is based on these reports. In addition, background history of specific relevance to the sculpture gallery and associated parts of the building is also included as this is useful in understanding its development.

3.1.2 **Early History:** the estates at Lowther have their origin in at least the medieval period, although there is evidence for earlier activity from the wider area (Greenlane Archaeology forthcoming b). Of more relevance are the origins of the castle, which are perhaps found in a reference from 1174 to the '*castellum de lauudre*', probably a reference to the earthworks known as Castlesteads situated to the north of the present castle (LUAU 1997, 24). The Lowther family and coat of arms are documented from the late 12th century (Landscape Agency 2002, 10) and the manor at Lowther was enclosed as a park by Sir Hugh Lowther in 1283 (Port 1981, 123). The Castle at the current site has its origins in the later 14th century, when the east tower was constructed (Perriam and Robinson 1998, 290). The Castle or Hall was likely built as a central range flanked by two square towers, which was subsequently extended ('Lowther I'; Landscape Agency 2002, 12). The west tower was added in the 16th century and, benefitting from the peaceful conditions near the border towards the end of the 16th and early 17th century, the house was enlarged and beautified; the whole site underwent several phases of alteration during the 17th and later centuries (Perriam and Robinson 1998, 290). The outer court was created between 1640 and 1664 when Sir John Lowther (d. 1675) (first baronet of Lowther, 1639) built the coach house and stables at a cost of £80 (Port 1981, 123-124).

3.1.3. Sir John Lowther, the second baronet, succeeded his grandfather in 1675 and was created Viscount Lonsdale in 1696 (Port 1981, 124). At first he set about improving the old house but began demolishing and rebuilding much of it on a palatial scale, befitting of the leading resident landed dynasty in Cumberland and Westmorland (Landscape Agency 2002, 10), with the architect William Talman, the work being undertaken by contract c1690s (Port 1981, 124-125). This work included the demolition of much of the old house in 1692 and the addition of a new main block as a showpiece ('Lowther II'; Landscape Agency 2002, 12-13). He found the location of the old house disagreeable, however, "in the Middle of the Village", so he displaced the old village, shifted the high road, and levelled the landscape such that "when executed the Place would be as pleasant as so Northern a climate was capable off [sic]" (Port 1981, 124). However, the Hall and inner west or chapel wing was gutted by fire in 1718 and although further rebuilding was planned by the third viscount (d.1751) with designs from Gibbs and Campbell, it was never undertaken (Port 1981, 127).

3.1.4 The estates were inherited by his cousin, Sir James Lowther (d. 1802), who would later become the first Earl of Lonsdale (Landscape Agency 2002, 10). Further grandiose schemes for reviving Lowther Castle were planned during the 1760s and 70s but never implemented, including designs from Matthew Brettingham, Capability Brown, and Robert and James Adam (Port 1981, 127). Sir James appears to have abandoned the idea of rebuilding the lost main block (Landscape Agency 2002, 13); further additions and improvements were made to the house c1800s under the supervision of Francis Webster, a mason of Kendal who developed into an architect, and further paper schemes were drawn up by Harrison of Chester, the foremost neo-classical architect in Northern England at the time (Port 1981, 127-8).

3.1.5 **The present castle:** Sir James was succeeded by his distant cousin William (d. 1844), the founder of the modern Lowther family, who was recreated Earl of Lonsdale (of the second creation) in 1807 (Landscape Agency 2002, 11). Ultimately Sir William Lowther commissioned Robert Smirke, the protégé of George Dance (1741-1825), surveyor to the City of London, to design him a symmetrical Gothic house with a varied silhouette whilst retaining the old outer courtyard and 17th century service wings, and he was directed to start work on the new Lowther Castle in April 1806 ('Lowther III'; Landscape Agency 2002, 11, 14; Port 1981, 128-9), the ruins of which form the main section of the

current Castle. Work started on the new stables in June, being executed by Webster in partnership with one B. Proctor – some of the plasterwork was done by Simpson of Kendal with the greater part completed by the ornamental plasterer, Bernasconi of London, and similarly some of the painting was undertaken by Colvin of Penrith, with the majority performed by Cornelius Dixon of London (Port 1981, 129). With reportedly little of the work left unfinished, Smirke submitted his account in June 1814 for a total expenditure of £77,000 since 1806 (Port 1981, 131). Sir William's eldest son, also William (d. 1872), the second of Earl of Lonsdale, was a notable collector of sculpture and reputedly added a top-lit picture gallery to the west wing and converted the south east cloister into a sculpture gallery in the 1860s to house his expanding collection of Roman statuary, modern busts, and archaeological relics (see below; Landscape Agency 2002, 17).

3.1.6 The estates were eventually inherited by Hugh Lowther (d. 1944), the fifth Earl, known to posterity as 'the Yellow Earl', in 1882 (Landscape Agency 2002, 11). Further alterations and refurbishments were made in the 1890s (Landscape Agency 2002, 17), however, the fifth Earl's free-spending largely wrecked the finances of the estate and he was forced to close the castle in 1935 as a result, the remaining contents being sold off by his successor at auction in 1947 in the largest English country house sale of the 20th century, which lasted 22 days (Landscape Agency 2002, 11; Port 1981, 131). The dispersal of its contents prevented it from being opened as a tourist attraction and the Castle was largely dismantled by the seventh Earl in 1957 (Landscape Agency 2002, 11) at which time the roofs were removed, 'the house gutted, and its bare walls left a magnificent ruin' (Port 1981, 131). It has remained an unoccupied ruin ever since.

3.1.7 **The Sculpture Gallery:** the origins of the sculpture gallery have already been alluded to (see *Section 3.1.5* above). However, specific historical details relating to its development are not plentiful. Despite the map evidence suggesting that it was constructed during the building of the present castle between 1806 and 1814 (see *Section 3.2* below), other sources suggest that it was not created until the 1860s, although these are apparently contradictory. One of these, dated 1860, describes how Lord Lonsdale, having funded excavations at Shap Abbey, undertaken by the Rev James Simpson, Vicar of Shap, also '*caused extensive researches to be made in the Roman station at Moresby, and various remarkable antiquities have already been found to enrich the museum lately appropriated at Lowther Castle for the antiquities found upon his estates* (Anon 1860, 480). Another source, dated 1866, states '*In the year 1866 Lord Lonsdale added to his magnificent seat of Lowther Castle two splendid galleries, which formed a worthy resting-place for the antiques that had wondered so much and been collected from so many sources*' (Michaelis 1882, 176-177). A more recent source also states that the sculpture galleries were added in 1866, to the designs of James Mawson (Port 1984, 192) but no reference is given and this would seem to be contradicted by drawings in the same article! Remarkably little detailed contemporary description of the gallery and its contents, as viewed by visitors, seems to have been made (as opposed to manuscript and other catalogues made directly for the Lowther estate, see *Section 3.1.8* below). The Rev. James Simpson in 1866, but not published until 1877, described Roman inscriptions from Kirkby Thore as having '*found a safe resting place in the gallery at Lowther*' (Simpson 1877, 8) as well as fragments of three early crosses removed from the '*Quale burial ground*' in Lowther church yard (*op cit*, 11; see *Section 5.1.6* below).

3.1.8 Original sources within the Lonsdale collection prove that the sculpture gallery certainly existed by at least 1865, as demonstrated by a series of essentially identical catalogues with photographs (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/12 1865; CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/13 1865; CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/14 1865; see Plate 5 to Plate 9). These are generally concerned with the large collection of Roman and Greek antiquities that had been acquired by the Lowthers and deposited at the castle in two galleries, the surviving 'sculpture gallery', originally known as the 'east gallery (see Plate 5) and the '*west or Caesar's gallery*', which now survives only as a roofless ruin, and as its name suggests held a collection principally made up of busts of Roman emperors (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/13 1865). The origins of many of the classical sculptures are not stated, while others are said to have been purchased from the Stowe or Bessborough collections (*ibid*). Subsequent catalogues of the contents of the galleries are considerably more detailed; a list from 1879 (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/20), entitled '*Catalogue of Pictures Statuary &c at Lowther Castle*', lists 91 Roman and Greek sculptures in the east gallery (most of these

are free standing but No. 140, which is described as a 'bull's head', was probably attached to the wall (see *Section 4.3.11*).

3.1.9 Other areas associated with the two galleries include a 'Roman Bath Room' and a 'Passage from Worthies Gallery to East Gallery', which is most likely the narrow passage at the north end of the area recorded (Room 1; see *Section 4.3.4-4.3.8*). Items listed within this area are, arguably, of considerably more interest as many came from named sites, typically a Roman fort, in the locality rather than from overseas but they are also of relevance in terms of the physical development of the building because some or all of them were evidently set into the wall of the passage (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/20 1879):

- '147 A Roman stone altar with inscription 'IOM ΛΛΛ Ancobunitnte' &c
- 148 A Roman stone altar with inscription
- 149 A fragment of stone with a tragic mask
- 150 A Grotesque head in stone
- 151 A marble terminal figure & a pedestal with mask
- 152 A stone fragment from [blank] abbey (a separate document confirms that this is Shap Abbey: CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/22 1879)
- 153 Two fragments of stone from Moresby
- 154 A stone fragment from Plumpton
- 155 Twenty three stone fragments
- 156 149 Marble & stone sculptured and inscribed tablets inserted in the wall
- 157 A stone fragment from Lowther church
- 158 A stone fragment from Bowness, Cumberland
- 159 A oak case containing various antique pottery, fragments of sculpture, specimens of minerals &c
- 160 A figure in a Grotto formed of specimens of crystals and spar'

3.1.10 A further room, described as 'Passage to sculpture gallery' is also listed and said to contain: '194 Mosaic of fish ormolu frame date 320 years BC' and '195 Mosaic of female head in ormolu frame' (*ibid*). In addition a list of 'Curiosities &c' is also given, which includes a number of interesting items:

- '203 Saxon Misal [sic] (in bronze) found at Stangrah in the parish of Whitbeck
- 204 Roman Hone found near Lowther
- 205 Chased ring found Gunar Castle 1832
- 206 Ring found in ruins of Shap Abbey Jan 1860
- 207 Stone chopper found at Askham in High Field March 1861 supposed to be 2000 years old
- 216 The canine teeth of a hyena found in the Kirkdale cave, Yorkshire
- 219 A Gold ring found in digging the foundations of the new cells in Carlisle jail
- 225 2 Bracelets found on a skeleton in a stone quarry on Slegill common
- 235 Handkerchief found in the walls of Carlisle Castle 1819 together with the remains of a rich female dress and bones of a female and child
- 251 Five old coins found at Holme Cultram, in the ruins of the Abbey 1823'

3.1.11 An undated printed version of the catalogue, presumably based on the two handwritten lists already discussed also exists (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/23 c1879). These have the items organised as east and west gallery but also include a 'Roman Room' within which are several more items of particular local interest:

'Fragment of a Roman altar, found at Old Carlisle ['Penrith' has been added in pencil], erected in honour of Jupiter by the wing called Augustan A.D. 188

A Roman altar, found at Old Carlisle ['Penrith' has been added in pencil], erected in honour of Jupiter by the wing called Augustan, A.D. 191

The base of a Roman altar

Fragment of a Roman altar, found at Borough Wall, near Workington

An inscribed stone, found at Moresby near Whitehaven "COH II THRAC. FEC"

Sculptured stones, found near Lowther church'

In addition, a loose letter contained within one of the catalogues dated May 15th 1861 from James Simpson and addressed to Lord Lonsdale, discusses the delivery of sculptured stone of Roman date found at Kirkby Thore to Lowther Castle. These are described in some detail: *'Three of them are fragments of monumental stones with sculptured figures of horse & riders, one a female reclining on a couch and another waiting upon her, two portions of lions, and several fragments, the use of which is somewhat uncertain. There is a portion of an altar which I think has been to "Serapis" but the inscription is not very legible. There is also an urn and the stone in [sic] which it stood'*. The account also states that drawings have been made of all of these pieces *'for the Duke of Northumberland's forthcoming work'*; this is presumably a reference to the *Lapidarium Septentrionale* by J Collingwood Bruce, which was published in 1875 under the patronage of Algernon, the 4th Duke of Northumberland. The printed lists also appear to have been subsequently used as sales catalogues, with comments and prices listed, which suggest that some items were sold at an early date, prior to the whole-scale estate sales of the 20th century (see Section 3.1.6 above).

3.1.12 There are also later lists of items held at the castle, which include items displayed in the galleries. An extract from an inventory dated 1889 includes some of the same items already listed (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/127 1889), while a longer list dated 1899, of items being made heirlooms of William 2nd Earl of Lonsdale (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/27 1899), again includes many recognisable items, although there are some important differences (as well as mistakes):

'Fragment of a Roman Altar, found at Old Carlisle, erected in honour of Jupiter by the king [sic] called Augustan AD 188

A Roman Altar, found at Old Carlisle, erected in honour of Jupiter by the king [sic] called Augustus AD 191

The Base of a Roman altar

Fragment of a Roman altar, found at Borough Wall near Workington

An inscribed stone, found at Moresby near Whitehaven Coti II Thrac Fec

Sculptured stones, found near Lowther church

Head of ox in marble

Seven fragments from Shap Abbey

Inscribed stone from Moresby

Cross, from Bowness, Cumberland

Ten fragments of Roman remains from Kirkby Thore

Two Roman monumental tablets from Plumpton

Two Roman inscribed stones from Old Carlisle, bought at the sale of Keswick Museum

Three tablets from Drumburgh'.

3.1.13 By the 20th century the lists of items seems to have become much shorter and vaguer. A valuation for probate purposes from 1945 (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/45 1945) includes only:

'69. Saxon stone carving from Lowther church

95. Various fragments of Sculpture probably emanating from churches and other buildings in the vicinity and other unimportant fragments (about twenty)

96. Marble head of an ox 22in. high.

The complete catalogue for the sale of the castle's contents does not list any of the minor antiquities and gives only limited information about the sculptures (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/2/16 1947).

3.2 Map and Image Regression

3.2.1 **Introduction:** again, because of the extensive previous investigations carried out detailed map regressions covering the development of Lowther Castle and the gardens have already been produced (The Landscape Agency 2002, and in particular Land Use Consultants 2010). As a result only a selection of early maps, those of most relevance in understanding the development of the sculpture gallery, is included in this section.

3.2.2 **Late 17th – 18th century:** the earliest plans and illustrations of Lowther Castle, from the late 17th century, depict what is described as 'Lowther II', that is the house and service wings built by the 1st Baronet and completed by at least 1683 (The Landscape Agency 2002, 13-14). The bulk of this work was some distance from what became the sculpture gallery but the east wing of the service buildings, probably the original stable block, was incorporated into the later buildings and is now '*the oldest part of Lowther to survive today*' (*op cit*, 13). The available evidence suggests that the east stables were built c1678, and were '*in a regular classical style with symmetrical elevations, central three-bay pediments, red stone quoins and cross mullion windows*' (*ibid*). Many of the relevant plans of this period are relatively lacking in detail; the example included (Plate 1) has been selected because shows the internal arrangement and position of apertures while the rest are essentially just block plans. This shows not only the shape of the building, which has a noticeable projecting section in the centre of the west elevation, but also the position of the doorways, windows and arrangement of stalls inside.

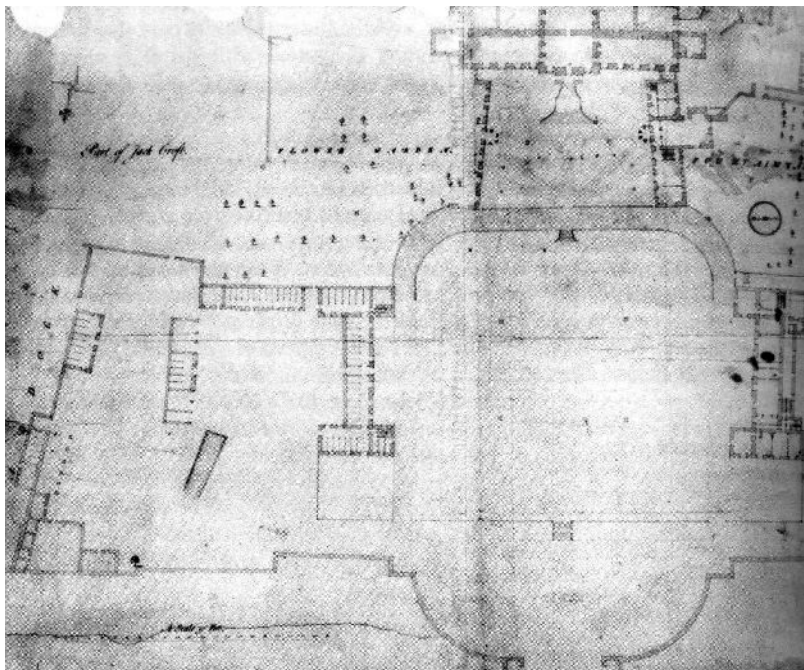


Plate 1: Plan of Lowther Castle after the fire of 1718, with the east wing of the stable block in the centre (after Port 1984, 194)

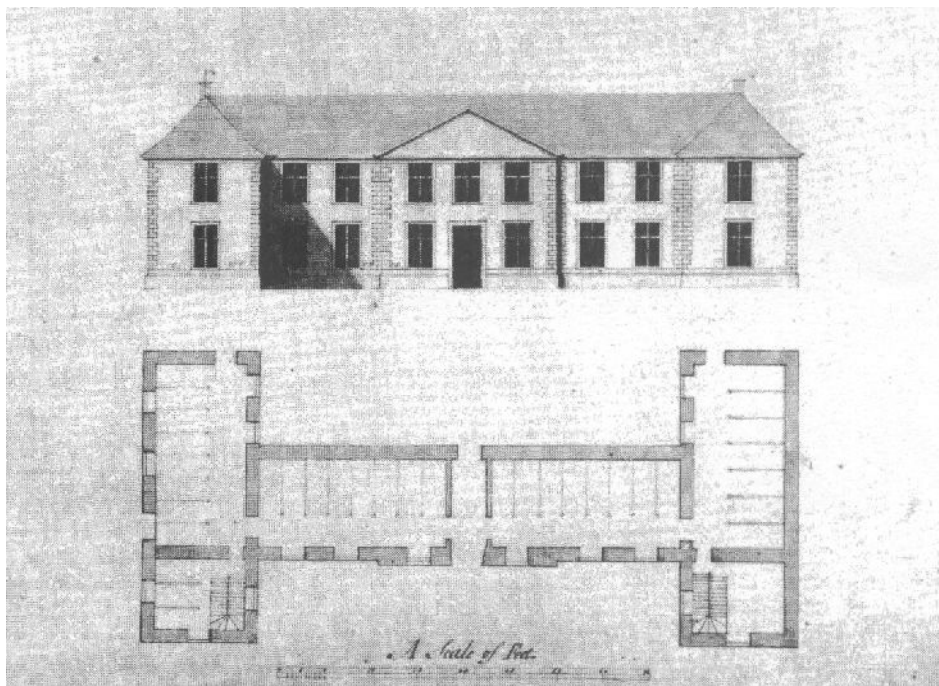


Plate 2: Plan and east facing external elevation of the east stable wing following the fire of 1718 (after Colvin *et al* 1980)

3.2.3 **Early 19th century:** the substantial rebuilding carried out by Smirke between 1806 and 1814 relied a great deal on plans previously drawn up by George Dance, a London-based architect who ‘Finding the commission, 300 miles from home, too burdensome at his age’ proposed Smirke as an alternative (Port 1984, 192). However, these improvements followed the construction of a new wing containing kitchens and offices, built by Francis Webster in 1802 (*op cit*, 191). Drawings of what was actually constructed during Smirke’s phase of work are remarkably few, although he was largely making additions to Dance’s earlier plans (see plates 7 and 9 in Port 1984). Two plans do demonstrate that this period produced essentially what survives today in ruinous form, a block plan (reproduced in Colvin *et al* 1980, 132) and a more detailed plan redrawn from a plan of JC Buckler (in Port 1984, 198; Plate 3). These clearly show that a section corresponding to the extant sculpture gallery was certainly constructed during this phase, adjacent to which were apparently additional structures including a ‘riding house’ (although see Section 3.2.4 below).

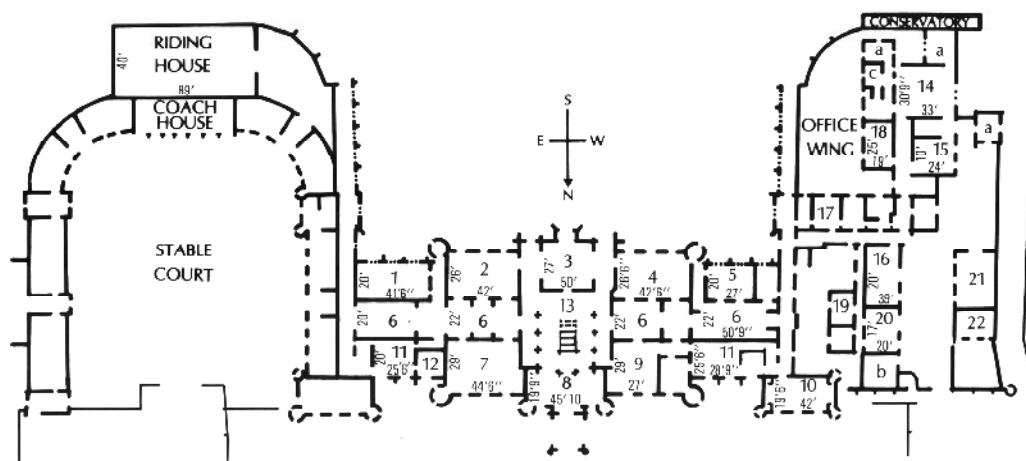


Plate 3: Plan of Lowther Castle as rebuilt by Smirke, 1806-1814 (after Port 1984, 198), with north to the bottom and the sculpture gallery to the right of the room marked ‘Coach House’

3.2.4 **Late 19th – early 20th century:** a series of Ordnance Survey maps from this period show the castle following its rebuilding between 1806 and 1814, by which time the elements forming the sculpture

gallery had evidently all been constructed (Plate 4). It is also notable that the 'riding house' shown in the plan of 1814 (Plate 3) is not present; presumably it had either been demolished between 1814 and 1859 or was never in fact built. Confusingly, a previous history of the site states that the riding house was demolished in 1893 prior to the visit of the German Kaiser, which was scheduled for 1895 but in the event never took place (The Landscape Agency 2002, 17). There is little detail of the internal arrangement in plan, but a series of photographs in the Lonsdale collection provide some information specific to the sculpture gallery and associated areas. These are of particular interest in showing the general arrangement of the sculpture gallery and some specific detail of elements apparently set into wall of the passage to the north, although there are frustratingly few photographs in total (see Plates 5 to 9).

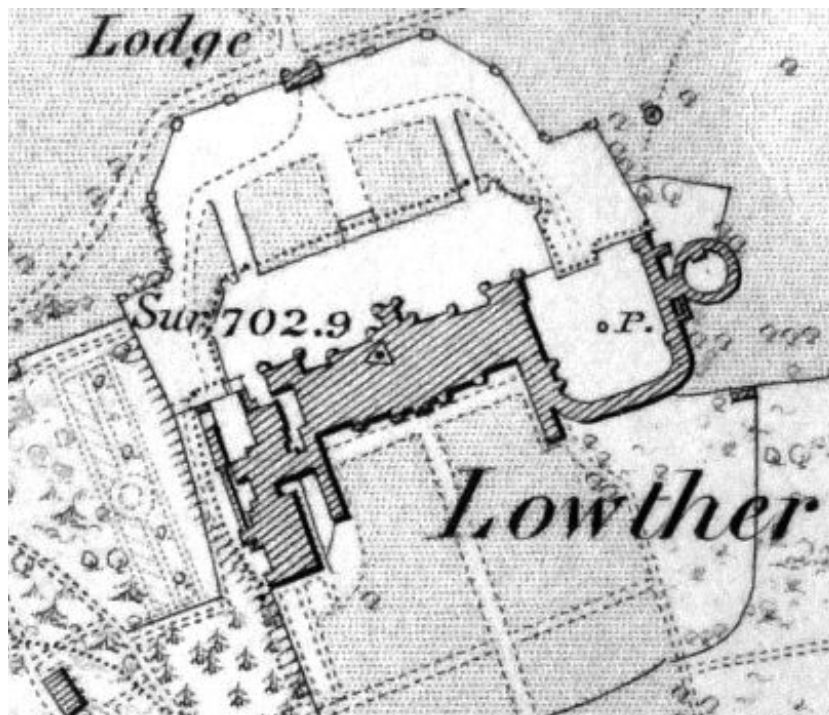


Plate 4: Ordnance Survey map of 1863



Plate 5: General view of the east gallery, 1865 (CRO(C) DLONS/L23/1/13 1865)

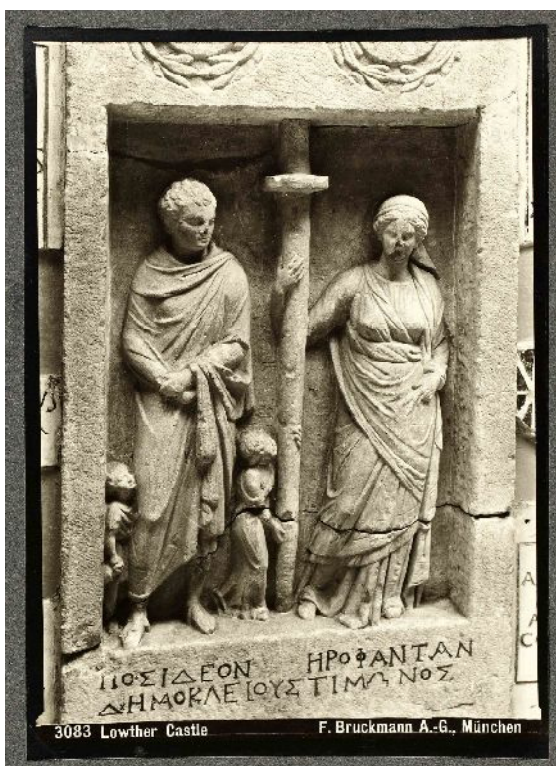


Plate 6 (left): Altar and inscribed fragments set into the wall, presumably of the passage, c1900 (CRO(C) DLONS/L28/7 c1900)

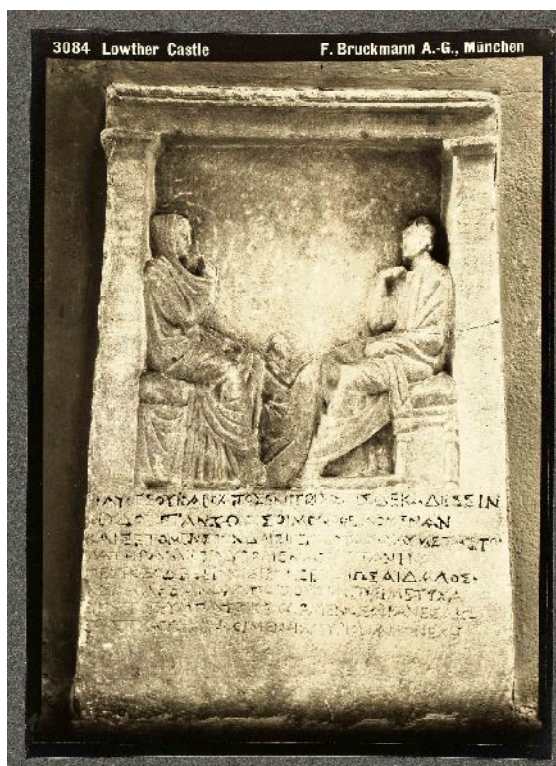


Plate 7 (right): Altar set into the wall, presumably of the passage, c1900 (CRO(C) DLONS/L28/7 c1900)



Plate 8 (left): Lower part of an altar and inscribed fragments set into the wall, presumably of the passage, c1900 (CRO(C) DLONS/L28/7 c1900)

Plate 9 (right): Upper part of the same altar and inscribed fragments set into the wall, presumably of the passage, c1900 (CRO(C) DLONS/L28/7 c1900)

3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 The general history of the development of Lowther Castle places the sculpture gallery in its wider context, although it is evident that there is a general lack of specific detail about its actual construction. The elements forming it were clearly constructed during Smirke's rebuilding of the early 19th century (Lowther III; incorporating the remains of the late 17th century stable block forming part of Lowther II), but it would appear that these were not necessarily originally built to form sculpture galleries; these appear to have been created in the 1860s, although it seems plausible that they grew out of something similar that already existed. It was during the 1860s in particular that the gallery began to grow, in particular on account of the activities of William Lowther, the 2nd Lord Lonsdale, who added a number of items from Roman sites around Cumbria including Plumpton (otherwise known as Old Penrith), Moresby, Burrow Walls (near Workington), and Kirkby Thore. The three sculptured stones with riders on horseback, described as having been found at Kirkby Thore and known as *reiter* stones (from the German for 'rider'), have recently been discussed (Edwards 2011); these pieces and the others evidently found at the same time were eventually acquired by the British Museum after sales at Lowther Castle in 1969 and 1970 (*op cit*, 139). Many of the other inscribed pieces will also have been reported but it is undoubtedly the case that many of the other items have not previously been published.

4. Building Recording

4.1 Arrangement and Fabric

4.1.1 The sculpture gallery comprises a narrow linear space aligned approximately north/south along the west side of the west stable block. It forms a long corridor, which has been broken down here into five separate sections which are numbered from one to five from north to south (see Figure 2). The gallery is largely built from neatly dressed ashlar stone blocks to the south and west, but more rubble construction is apparent to the east. Much of the south end has recently been re-roofed or is in the process of being restored. Internally there are traces of plaster in many places as well as the plaster vaulted ceiling in the south section (Rooms 4 and 5).

4.1.2 The north elevation and the north end of the east wall (i.e., Rooms 1 to 4) are internal to the west stable block; the east elevation of the gallery is only visible externally at the south end (Figure 2). The main entrance to the gallery is from the south. The south elevation and the south end of the west elevation of the sculpture gallery are ashlar block built and are external (Rooms 3 to 5), while the north end (Rooms 1 and 2) would have formed part of the internal elevation of the west wing (see Figure 2).

4.2 External Detail

4.2.1 **East elevation:** the south end of the east elevation is a rough rubble build of dressed blocks (Plate 10) with a 0.05m deep plinth at its base, which has a flat top, and scrolled wrought iron brackets for the gutter remain. There is a doorway to the north-east, with a pointed arch, which is blocked with red brick in English-garden-bond in a ratio of four to one, and the remains of render survive which is scored to look like ashlar blocks (Plate 11).



Plate 10 (left): The east external elevation



Plate 11 (right): Doorway on the east external elevation

4.2.2 **South elevation:** the south elevation is largely ashlar block built, with two octagonal turrets with crenellated tops projecting either side of a doorway, which has moulded ribs with moulded trefoil-style arches above set within a larger four-centred (depressed) arch (see Plate 12 and Plate 13). The wall is crenellated above the doorway and at the top of the turrets (see Figure 3), which also have decorative panels with trefoil mouldings. The masonry on the north-east side is rougher, comprising dressed blocks in rough courses, and is more mixed, containing both limestone and sandstone blocks.



Plate 12 (left): The south external elevation

Plate 13 (right): Detail of the doorway on the south external elevation (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

4.2.3 **West elevation:** there are five openings in a row at the south end of the west elevation (along the side of Room 5; Plate 14; Figure 3), four of which are windows with three divisions and trefoil heads (Plate 15 and Plate 16; Figure 3). The central opening is a doorway with a similar head to the one on the south elevation (see *Section 4.2.2* above).



Plate 14 (left): The south end of the west external elevation

Plate 15 (centre): Window to Room 5

Plate 16 (right): Detail of window tops along the west external elevation

4.2.4 To the north of these five openings the elevation projects slightly with angled stepped buttresses, corresponding with the west side of Room 4, and there is a central window with transoms dividing it into six-lights (Plate 17 and Plate 18; Figure 2). The window top matches those to the south (Plate 19). This section is topped by two turrets, which are currently not in place, and the central detail (with a niche below) is missing. The crenellations along the top of the wall to the south had recently been restored and had a projecting moulded band along the top. To the north of this projecting section (corresponding with Room 3) there are two small ground floor windows with two rows of battlements above.



Plate 17 (left): The projecting section to the south end of the west external elevation

Plate 18 (centre): Detail of the window to Room 4

Plate 19 (right): Detail of the window top to Room 4

4.2.5 The west elevation of the gallery is butted by the southern façade of the west wing of the Castle at approximately the threshold between Rooms 2 and 3 (see Figure 3; Plate 20). The continuation of the gallery to the north (Rooms 1 and 2) would have formed an internal elevation of the west wing (see Plate 21). All of the stonework is very rough and has been patched. There is a large arched opening on the south side, which was presumably a doorway (or possibly a large fireplace), which is blocked with rough stone rubble (Plate 22). Within the larger archway there is a smaller doorway on the north side, but it has no obvious lintel. There are patches of concrete to the north and south and there is a large section filled in with concrete blocks to the north. The stub of a wall projects to the west below this concrete block section (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).



Plate 20 (left): The south façade of the west wing of the Castle (the sculpture gallery is to the right) (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 21 (centre): The west elevation of Room 1 and 2, butted by the south façade of the west wing

Plate 22 (right): Large archway

4.2.6 Above the large arched doorway at the south end of Room 1 there is a fireplace at first floor level, with a brick backing and a low brick arch with an iron bar below (Plate 24). The iron bar support spans an earlier opening in stone. The backing is also in early brick, but later in-filling in hand-made and machine made brick has narrowed it and made it splayed. There is also an angled slab of sandstone above the arch, which forms a flue to the north, with an early brick filling. There is a patch of concrete render to its south side, possibly blocking a window, and another patch of concrete render to the north, possibly blocking another opening. This section of the wall is topped with concrete coping, with remnants of timber rails(?). These appear to have been reused as two pieces have carpenter's marks chiselled into them in the form 'IIII' on the one to the north (Plate 24) and 'III' on the one to the south (Plate 25).



Plate 23 (left): Fireplace above the archway

Plate 24 (top right): Carpenter's marks to the north

Plate 25 (bottom right): Carpenter's marks to the south

4.2.7 To the north of the wall stub on the ground floor there are three pointed-arched doorways with dressed stone jambs above which the first floor level is open. The wall then returns to the west and becomes two stories again. (Note that this section of the west external elevation is to the west of what is considered to be part of the sculpture gallery; the north end of the sculpture gallery is to the east of a narrow corridor of which the west external elevation forms a part). The south elevation of this projecting section (towards the north end of Room 1; see Figure 2) has a ground floor doorway on the east side, with a concrete skim covering the jambs and an area above in-filled with concrete blocks. There is a lot of small, very early hand-made brick in this section (Plate 26 and Plate 27), some of which probably correspond to flues built into the wall. The upper floor has an opening on the east side, which is partly in-filled with concrete blocks, which extends to the west, where there is another possible window on upper floor, but the wall is broken away at ground floor level. The west end of the wall has been repaired with a skim of concrete on part of the ground floor where the core would otherwise be exposed.



Plate 26 (left): The projecting section towards the north end of Room 1

Plate 27 (right): Detail of the brickwork in the south elevation of the projecting section

4.2.8 The north end of the west external elevation is two-stories with a gabled top which has been partly built up with concrete blocks (see Plate 28 to Plate 30). The ground floor level is fairly plain (Plate 31), with a blocked door on the north side with concrete render over and a modern timber lintel. There is another blocked doorway on the south side with stone blocking and a stone arched top. There is some brick included in the central section. The upper floor has remnants of plaster and a central projecting chimney breast with a fireplace with splayed sides and an iron bar supporting the top and brick backing (Plate 32). There is further brickwork above the fireplace to the level of the roof (Plate 29). The early bricks typically measure 23 x 6 x 13 cm.



Plate 28 (left): North end of the gabled top

Plate 29 (centre): Central section of the gabled top

Plate 30 (right): South end of the gabled top



Plate 31 (left): West elevation of the projecting section at the north end of the west external elevation

Plate 32 (right): Fireplace on the first floor of the projecting section

Ground Floor and Basement Plan of the Sculpture Gallery, Stables, and Courtyard

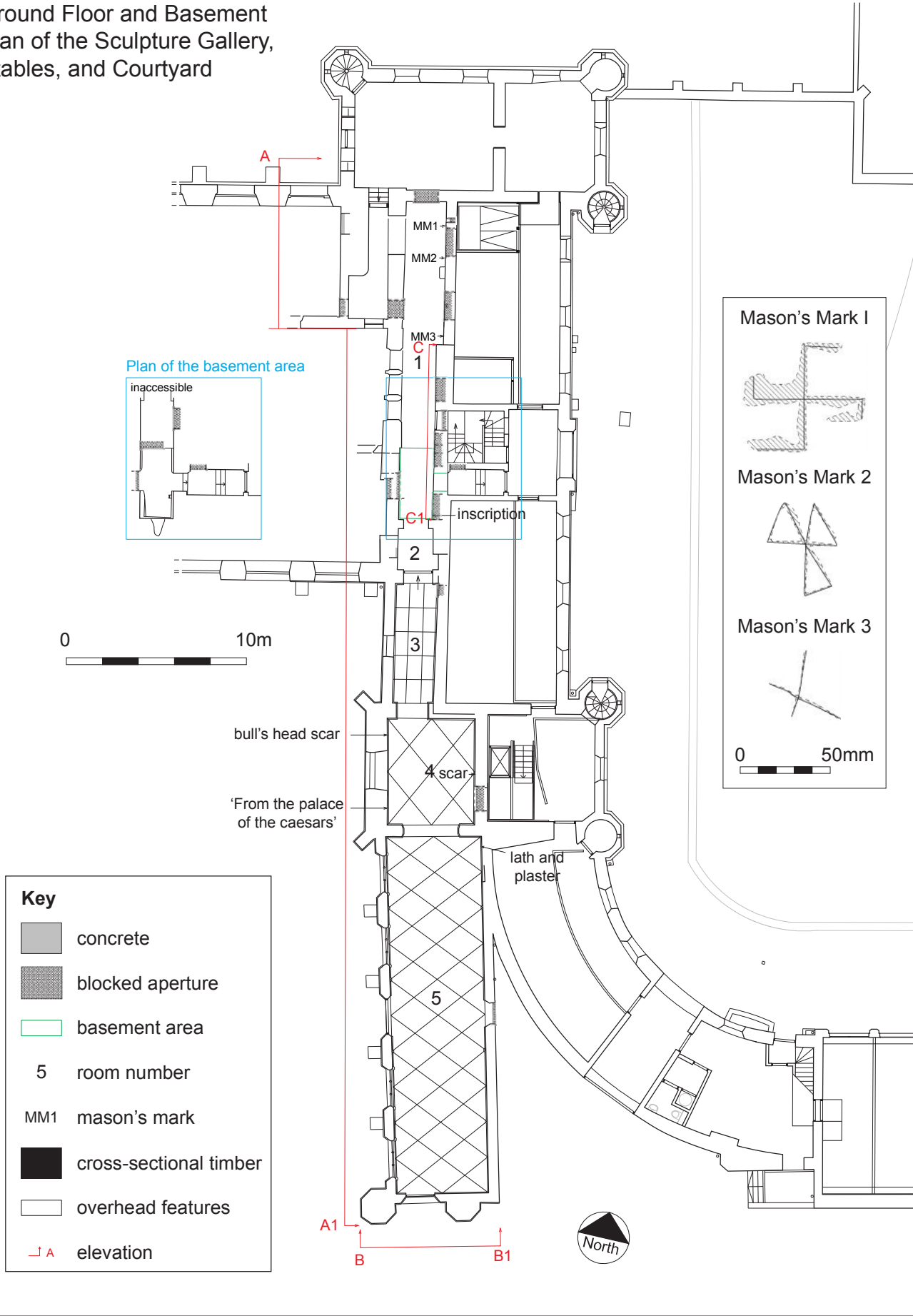
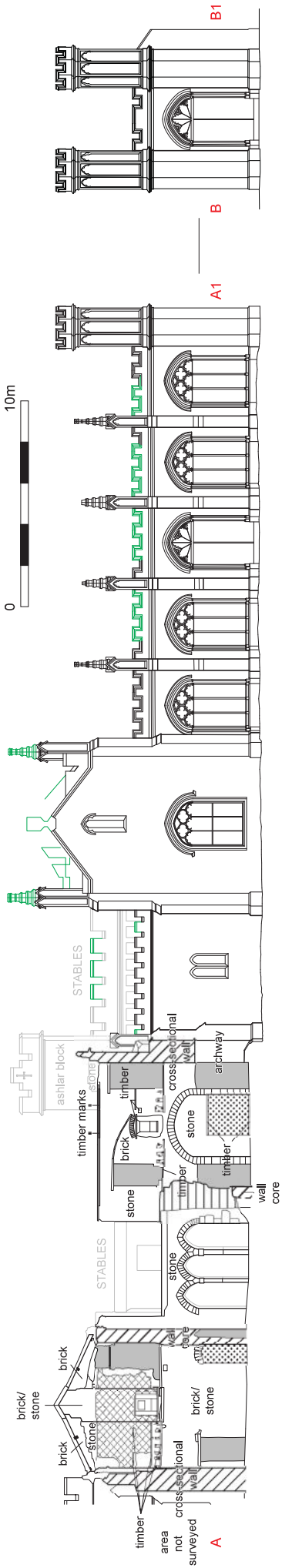


Figure 2: Plan of the ground floor and basement and illustrations of the mason's marks



STABLES -
WEST ELEVATION
OF WEST BLOCK

WEST EXTERNAL ELEVATION OF THE SCULPTURE GALLERY

SOUTH EXTERNAL
ELEVATION OF THE
SCULPTURE GALLERY

Key

- blocked aperture
- blockwork
- brick
- cross-sectional timber
- concrete
- cross-sectional wall (except where indicated)
- plaster
- recent renovation
- features to the rear

EAST INTERNAL ELEVATION OF ROOM 1

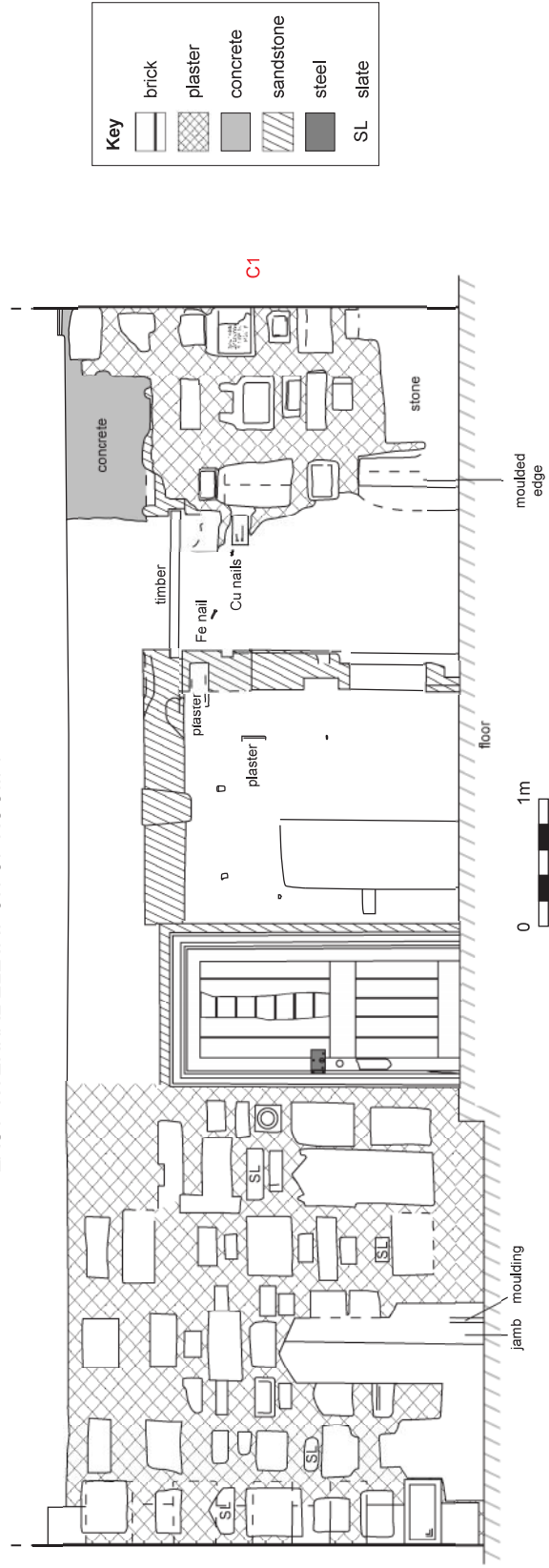
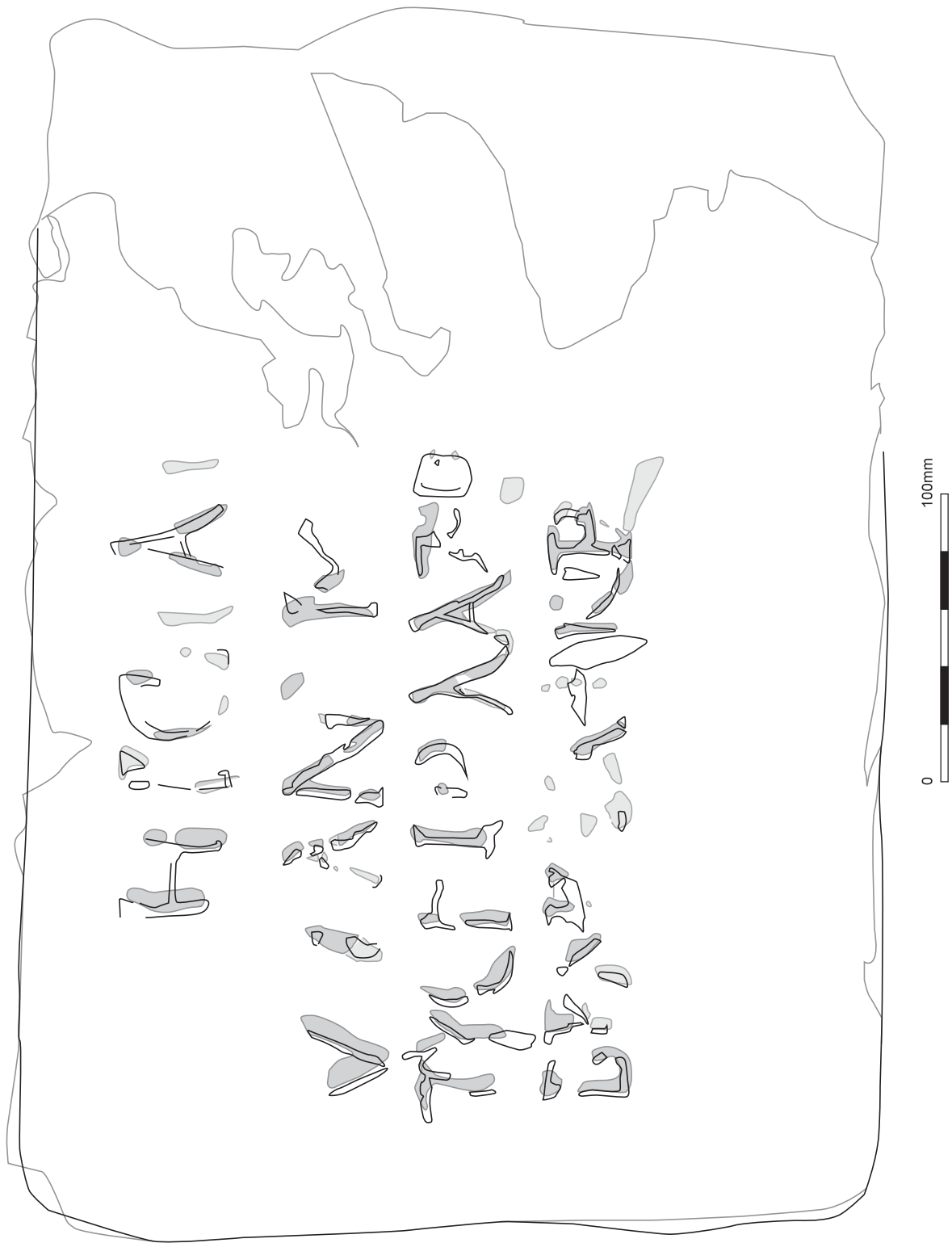


Figure 3: West and south external elevations of the Sculpture Gallery and the south end of the east internal elevation of Room 1



Key

- 'Edge' taken from the rubbing
- Possible edge taken from the rubbing
- Overlay from the digital photographs

Figure 4: Illustration of the inscription impressed in the wall plaster of the Sculpture Gallery.
 Note that the image has been reversed and inverted.

4.3 Internal Detail

4.3.1 **Basement:** the ceiling in this room is constructed from corrugated concrete sheets and concrete tongue and groove planks supported by iron straps. The floor is concrete and there are remains of whitewash on each of the elevations (Plate 33). A hole has been broken through on the east side of the north elevation which gives access to a small crawl space to the north. The rest of the elevation is plain with pipes attached. The crawl space to the north could not be accessed safely, however, the rough masonry of the east elevation could be seen from the south; the jambs of one of the windows from Room 1 extend upwards from below the ceiling on the basement level (Plate 34).



Plate 33 (left): North elevation of the basement

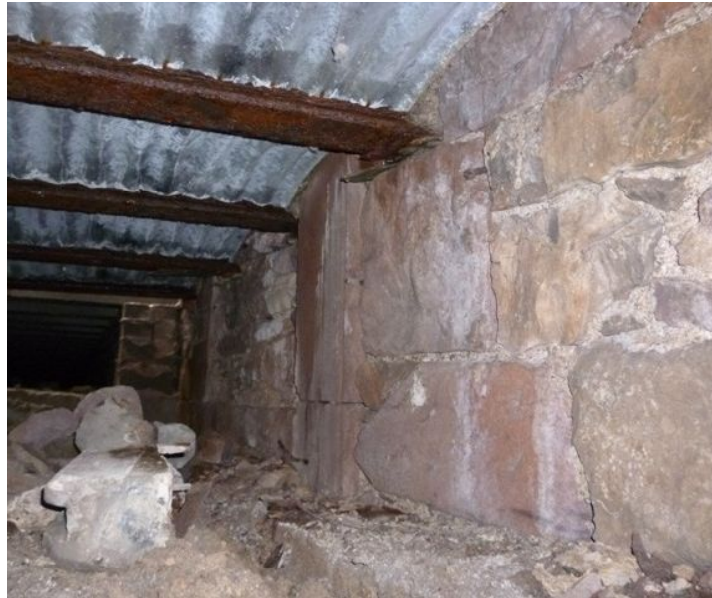


Plate 34 (right): Crawl space

4.3.2 The east elevation has a slight plinth on the north side of a central door with a dressed ashlar block surround exposed on the north side and an iron bar lintel. The stables are accessible to the east via steps from the central door. To the south of the doorway is a higher level chamfered, dressed stone plinth, below which are ashlar blocks. A wooden post is attached which has a groove down the west side (Plate 35). The south elevation is plain and has a slight step out towards the base. A hole has been punched through revealing the rough masonry build (Plate 35). The west elevation similarly has a slight bulge at the base on the south side and there is another smaller bulge in the wall below that (Plate 36). The central doorway on this side is blocked with concrete blocks and has an iron I-beam lintel. The elevation is fairly plain to the north.



Plate 35 (left): The east and south elevations of the basement

Plate 36 (right): The west elevation of the basement

4.3.3 **Ground Floor Room 1:** this room forms the north end of the sculpture gallery. It no longer has a roof or ceiling and although it has two floors only the ground floor is accessible (the scaffolding boards, which had been in place during the site visit in August, had been removed, which prevented access to the first floor). The north end of the corridor has an alcove which was possibly originally a doorway (Plate 37) with a low arched top. It has been plastered over and there is plaster either side which has been scored to resemble ashlar blocks. There are well-dressed red sandstone quoins at the north end of the east elevation also, which possibly butt those to the north (Plate 38). Immediately to the south of the quoins in the north-east corner there is an indented channel in the wall at ground floor level, which is lined with machine-made brick (Plate 38). It was evidently for the downpipe and extended to the first floor, although it became less regular at that point.

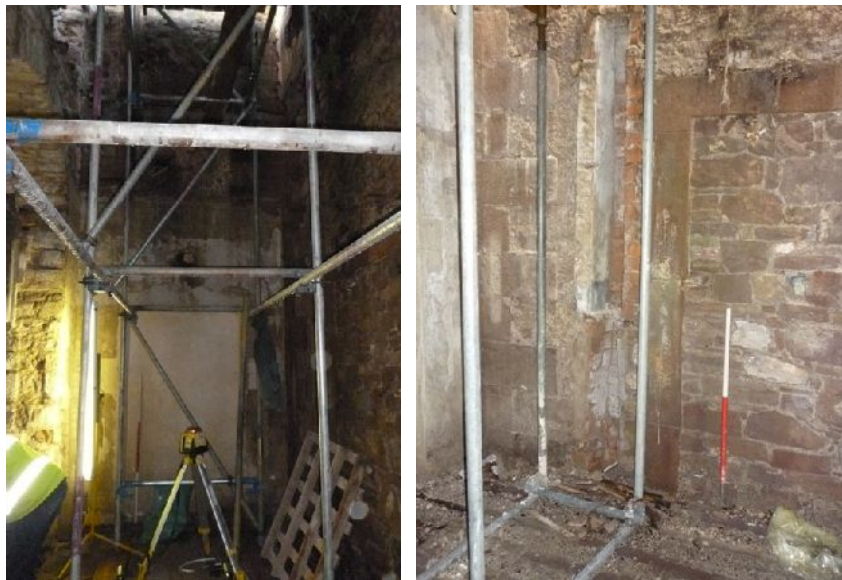


Plate 37 (left): North elevation of Room 1

Plate 38 (right): North-east corner of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

4.3.4 There is a blocked doorway to the south of this channel which has square-dressed sandstone surrounds with stone mason's marks on two of the stones (see Figure 2). The mason's mark to the north is in the form of a swastika (Plate 40; Figure 2, Mason's Mark 1); the one to the south resembles three upward pointing triangles in a row of two above one, touching at the centre (Plate 41; Figure 2, Mason's

Mark 2). To the south of this there is a piece of sculpted stone (a fragment of grave cover with heraldic device carved in relief, Plate 42) on a timber plinth, with iron clamps on top fixing it to the wall. To the south of this there is another 'doorway' in the same style as the one to the north. The lintels of both are in two parts. The one to the south has part of a moulded inner detail, so perhaps they were in fact both originally windows with a central mullion; this is actually more clear from the bases, which have beaded edges. There are further quoins to the south, one of which has an 'X' shaped mason's mark (Figure 2, Mason's Mark 3).



Plate 39 (left): The north end of the east elevation of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 40 (top right): Mason's Mark 1

Plate 41 (bottom right): Mason's Mark 2



Plate 42: Grave cover fragment

4.3.5 The wall then steps out to the south with some plaster remnants and quoins at the turn (Plate 43). This section plastered in parts and very irregular; the plastered areas have square and rectangular holes in it, which sometimes record impressions of objects in the plaster at the back. A jamb with a

moulded edge was exposed behind some of this plasterwork at the north end of the section and although the south edge is less obvious it presumably is aligned with the window above on the first floor, which is the case with the other blocked 'doorways' to the north. The floor steps up to the south and there is a doorway a short distance to the south, with a ten-panel door in a deep moulded frame with heavy beading (Plate 44). This is blocked inside with bricks leaving an alcove, with a metal light switched on the north side.



Plate 43 (left): North end of the jutting section of Room 1

Plate 44 (right): Deep moulded frame with heavy beading

4.3.6 There is a further blocked doorway to the south, which is apparent from the remains of sandstone quoins with traces of a beaded edge, but it is badly damaged by having had panels cut out. The doorway has a heavy lintel, with a keystone (Plate 45), the north end of which forms the south jamb of the extant doorway with the deep moulded frame. There is a small area of blocking within the blocking of this door, approximately 0.5m wide by 1.4m tall, which is in-filled with stone rubble. There is a thin piece of timber, possibly forming a lintel, cut into the lintel of this door and the lintel of another possible doorway to the south. The jamb on the north is evident as a row of battered quoins, again with panels cut in and filled with plaster, one with the impression of a Roman inscription (see Plate 46 and Plate 47; Figure 4; see *Section 5.1.8*). The wall returns at the south end at the buttress, which is finished with scored plaster and has rolled corners, at the end of the room. The south elevation is open as a 'doorway' between the two buttresses, which have a heavy timber lintel (Plate 48).



Plate 45 (left): Doorway with keystone

Plate 46 (right): South end of the east elevation of Room 1



Plate 47 (left): Inscription preserved in the plaster, south end of Room 1 (note that the inscription is mirrored and inverted)

Plate 48 (right): The first floor level of the south elevation of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

4.3.7 The west elevation has two pieces of timber built in to the south end of the room up to the edge of a doorway to the north (Plate 49). The doorway is blocked but within the blocking is a row of dressed quoins (many of which are evidently reused and some finished with cross-broaching) for a smaller doorway (Plate 50). The main part is still covered with plaster, which has been scored presumably in order to fix the original skim. To the north of this is a rounded arch, which is built in hand-made brick and is stepped out in concrete blocks to the north (Plate 51). To the north of this there are three arches in roughly dressed stone (Plate 52 and Plate 53). The north side of the northernmost arch has some more finely dressed stone, but it is rather crudely cut back. The elevation steps back again north of the arches, to a doorway with a rounded stone arch, which is filled with machine-made brick comprising alternating rows of stretchers and headers. There is a large opening to the north of this, with a rounded stone arch and small quoins, which leads into the corridor beyond.



Plate 49 (left): Timber in the west elevation at the south end of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 50 (centre): Quoins in the west elevation at the south end of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 51 (right): Arch in the west elevation at the south end of Room 1



Plate 52 (left): Stone arches on the west elevation of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 53 (right): Detail of the top of the stone arches in Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

4.3.8 **Ground Floor Room 2:** this room has the original sandstone flag floor and is actually raised relative to the floor to the north but continues into the south end of Room 1. It has no ceiling or roof. The ground floor walls are mostly finished with plaster scored as ashlar blocks and angled skirting. The north and south elevations comprise openings to the adjoining rooms. The opening to the north has no surround other than beaded cornices. The one to the south has a more complex beaded moulding for a wide door frame (Plate 54). The east elevation is mostly plain plaster and skirting with an alcove on the south side (Plate 55). The plaster has been removed within the alcove, revealing quoins on the north side. The west elevation comprises exposed stonework on the south side whereas the north side is filled in with lath and plaster, covered with a scored skim (Plate 56).



Plate 54 (left): South elevation of Room 2

Plate 55 (centre): Alcove in the east elevation of Room 2

Plate 56 (right): The west elevation of Room 2

4.3.9 **Ground Floor Room 3:** this room also has a sandstone flag floor, which is slightly lower than Room 2, which is accessed by two stone steps to the north. It has a plaster ceiling with deep moulded cavetto and rolled cornice (Plate 57). The lath and plaster ceiling also has beaded ribs with spiralled bosses, although only four of these remain. There is also a central boxed skylight, which is lined with timber, although the glazing is now gone. The plaster remains in places on the walls, which are also finished with a chamfered stone plinth. The north elevation is essentially just a doorway with a pointed arch (Plate 58), which is lined with lath and plaster. The top part of the arch has been filled with more lath and plaster with an attached moulded batten. The stonework on the east side butts a pre-existing sandstone window frame at the north end of the east elevation (Plate 59), but the west side is contemporary with the west elevation. The lintel at the north end of the east elevation has square jambs, which are similar to those of the windows in Room 1 to the north. This window is filled with stone, a lot of which is dressed and re-used. One piece has moulding. The wall is largely covered with lath and plaster to the south, which is, in effect, forming 'dry-lining' and has been scored to give the appearance of ashlar blocks. Patches of the wall surface proper are visible behind, which is finished with roughcasting and lime wash.



Plate 57 (left): Ceiling in Room 3

Plate 58 (centre): North elevation of Room 3 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 59 (right): Blocked aperture in the east elevation of Room 3

4.3.10 The south elevation is essentially a large opening with a pointed arch. It is all plaster finished with ribbed corners. The east side is just timber stud attached to a solid wall whereas the west wall is solid. There is a central two-light, central mullion window on the west elevation, with splayed jambs and sill (Plate 60). The plaster has been removed below revealing the window frame extends further down to a heavy sandstone sill. The plaster finish is intact at the south end of the elevation, but to the north there is a patch of what looks to be a thick grey concrete render although some plaster is actually attached to the wall and survives higher up. There are levelling timbers built into the wall, or the scars for them, and there is some early brick included in the build.

**Plate 60: The west elevation of Room 3**

4.3.11 **Ground Floor Room 4:** the floor is currently covered but is presumably also sandstone flags. The room has a ribbed vaulted plaster ceiling, with scored ashlar effect and spiral bosses (Plate 61) as per those in Room 5 (see Plate 68). The walls are all finished with plaster and scored with an ashlar block effect. The north elevation has a large opening on the west side (Plate 62) with an engaged column in the north-west corner on an octagonal base with scotia moulding extending into ribs, with a very simple moulded top. The east side of the opening at least is 'dry-lined' with lath and plaster over the stonework, with the line of a possibly quoin opening visible in an exposed section. There is a further engaged column in the north-east corner. The east elevation is mostly plain, with a plaster scar, perhaps from an attached statue near the centre, and the doorway on the south side is possibly a recent insertion or has recently been altered (Figure 2). There are concrete blocks on top of the doorjamb and it has a concrete lintel. The south elevation opens through a large arch (Plate 63), which has chamfered jambs all of which are finished with plaster and have ribbed corners. There are engaged columns in the south-east and south-west corners and the west elevation has the same finish. There is text stencilled on the south side of the west elevation, which reads 'FROM THE PALACE OF CÆSARS. ROME.' (Plate 64). This has been repainted, causing the text to look slightly embossed, and although the repainted text mostly lines up with the earlier text, the word 'Rome' has been moved slightly to the north, causing it to be better centred than it was before on the second line. There is a large six-light mullion and transom window with an arched top to the north of this text, with splayed jambs, which extend to the floor, and a dressed stone sill. There is an impressed mark in the plaster to the north which resembles a bull's head (Plate 65).



Plate 61 (left): Upper part of the north elevation of Room 5

Plate 62 (centre): Doorway on the west side of the north elevation of Room 5

Plate 63 (right): Upper part of the south elevation of Room 5

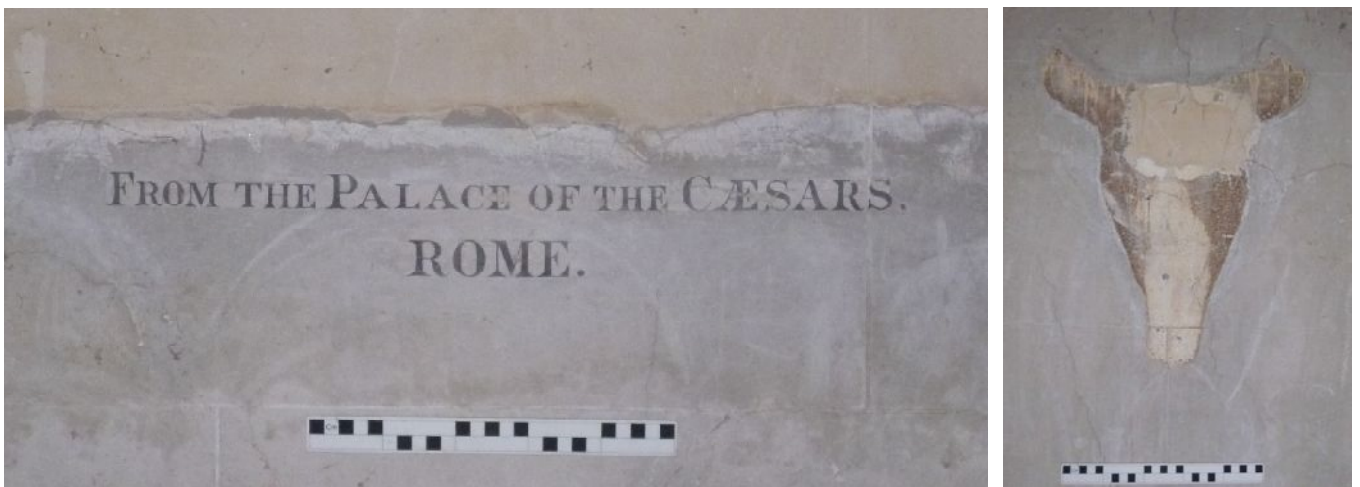


Plate 64 (left): Text 'FROM THE PALACE OF THE CÆSARS. ROME.'

Plate 65 (right): Impressed 'bull's head'

4.3.12 **Ground Floor Room 5:** the floor was covered to protect it during the restoration, but it is presumably sandstone flags underneath. The room has a ribbed vaulted ceiling like Room 4 (Plate 66 and Plate 67 and Plate 68), with additional 'leaf' bosses at its north and south end. The roof is formed of two hipped sections to the north and south, meeting at the central valley (Plate 66). The trusses are low king post type but much of this has been recently replaced. The tops of the windows have arches in stone with attached plaster mouldings. The walls mostly have surviving plaster, which is scored as ashlar blocks, although some elevations are actual ashlar stonework. All of the elevations have a chamfered stone plinth. The north elevation has a large opening with ribbed corners and arch and is otherwise plain (Plate 69). The plaster has been partially removed at the north end of the east elevation, with lath and plaster filling a gap in the stonework, which may have been an opening (Plate 70). Much of the stonework, which is in fairly irregular courses, is reused (Plate 71). The east elevation is broken into five sections by four engaged columns and another one at each corner of the room (Plate 72). A central alcove is formed in a doorway which is blocked externally with modern machine made perforated bricks loosely set in lime mortar (Plate 73). The doorway is arched and the surround is plastered and ribbed on the south side where the plaster survives. The remainder of the wall is plain plaster. The south elevation has a plain scored plaster finish on the east side of a central doorway, which has a stone roll-moulded surround and engaged columns on octagonal bases with trefoil head (Plate 74 and Plate 75). West of the doorway the wall comprises ashlar stone. The west elevation is all stone block work and mirrors the five divisions along the east elevation, with four large three-light windows and one doorway, all of which

have engaged columns on octagonal bases and further columns between (Plate 76). All of the columns are stone.



Plate 66 (left): View of the ceiling in Room 5, looking south

Plate 67 (right): Detail of the upper part of the south elevation of Room 5



Plate 68: Detail of three decorative elements from the ceiling in Room 5



Plate 69 (left): General view of Room 5 from the south (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 70 (centre): Edge of lath and plaster and exposed stonework

Plate 71 (right): Stonework exposed in the east elevation of Room 5 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)



Plate 72 (left): East elevation of Room 5 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

Plate 73 (right): Blocked door on the east elevation of Room 5



Plate 74 (left): Doorway in the south elevation of Room 5

Plate 75 (right): Detail of the door head in the south elevation of Room 5



Plate 76: East elevation of Room 5

4.3.13 **First Floor Room 1:** none of the first floor was properly accessible at the time of the survey. The masonry of the wall is exposed above the doorway in the north elevation, with rows of quoins on the east side and a band of red sandstone on the west running horizontally then vertically, apparently extending to the full height of the wall, as well as is a band of slate running horizontally across the elevation. The east elevation is largely covered with cement and roughcast render. There is a row of windows with sandstone surrounds in line with those on the ground floor below. The window at the north end is blocked and rendered over, but it is still visible and the quoins are also exposed. The window south of the centre has joist holes cut through the sill and blocking and the south jamb has been moved slightly to the north. There is a smaller window to the south in the same general style and a further very broken aperture to the south and there are the remains of cornice with beading at this end (Figure 3).

4.3.14 The west elevation has a window on the south side with a heavy timber lintel. There is a return to the north in the stone corresponding to the concrete block work below. It is open to the north of this, and was evidently originally a single large opening with dressed jambs, which are splayed from this side. To the north, there is a slight return to the west and the rest of the wall is roughcast with one extant window as per those to the east and one sill for another and there is a hole at the far north end. There is a small doorway with timber in the jambs and over lintel and there is a row of joist holes to the south below the base of the doorway. There is no first floor level as such to the south elevation.



Plate 77 (right): North end of Room 1 (photograph taken 25th August 2011)

4.3.15 **First Floor Room 2:** there are remains of a cornice on the west side, which is cavetto moulded and beaded. There is a pointed arch to the south, which is mostly covered by lath and plaster (Plate 78), of which the cornice forms part. The alcove on the south side of the east elevation at ground floor level (see *Section 4.3.9*; Plate 55) continues to the first floor, and has quoins in its jambs (Plate 79). Quoins are also present on the south side of a projecting section to the north, but this is partially covered by lath and plaster (Plate 80), which presumably held the cornice and does not continue beyond first floor level. The north elevation contains the top of the doorway, with a heavy hand-sawn timber lintel.



Plate 78 (left): Arch in the north elevation at first floor level in Room 2

Plate 79 (centre): Alcove on the first floor level of Room 2

Plate 80 (right): Quoins at the corner of the projection section, east elevation, first floor level of Room 2

4.3.16 **Second Floor Room 2:** Room 2 is the only part of the sculpture gallery to extend above first floor level, continuing into what is effectively a small tower. The walls throughout are comprised of exposed stone at this level. The quoins evident in the east elevation below this level stop at this level (Plate 81), and some of the original render between them and on the floor below can be seen going behind the buttress to the south, demonstrating that the south elevation butts the east. There is a doorway in the west elevation with a hand-sawn timber lintel, which is filled with concrete blocks and there is a window on the east side of the north elevation, looking over the lower part of Room 1 (Plate 82). This has a neatly finished timber lintel and rebated stone surround. Above this level there was a further small space, which was generally plainer and all the walls seem to be contemporary with each other. There is a small window to the south elevation with a lancet top and rebated dressed surround. This section has a new roof.

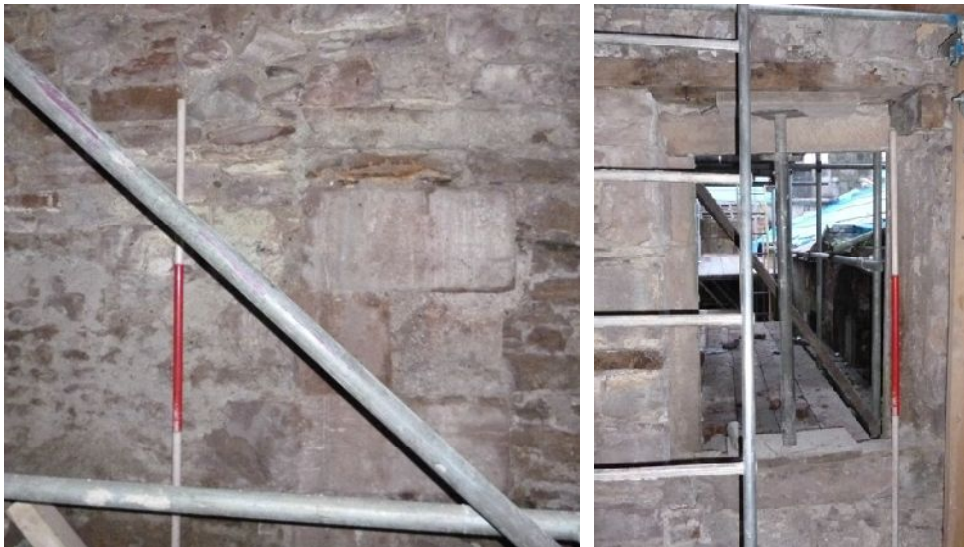


Plate 81 (left): Quoins in the east elevation

Plate 82 (right): Window in the north elevation

5. Discussion

5.1 Phasing

5.1.1 **Introduction:** unfortunately, phasing the development of this section of the building is hampered by viewing it effectively in isolation from the rest of the castle. The phasing of both the sculpture gallery and castle might be refined if their development was viewed holistically. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify a number of phases of development, which can be dated in relative detail on account of the extensive historical information that is available about the site.

5.1.2 **Phase 1 (late 17th century):** the earliest elements of the sculpture gallery clearly related to the building of Lowther II in 1678-1683, and are represented within the building by the east wall of the passageway forming the north end of the sculpture gallery (Room 1), and the same wall in Room 2 and Room 3. Within this, in Rooms 1 and 2, there were numerous blocked windows and doorways as well as an evidently projecting section. Both the windows and doorways had dressed sandstone forming details such as quoins, jambs, and lintels, and the ovolo-moulded mullions of what were clearly very tall windows were evident in a number of places. In addition, the projecting central section also has visible quoins and even evidence for the position of a pedimented top on the upper floor, as well as the original external render hidden behind later wall finishes. The arrangement of this wall and the extant former stable block to the east (which was not recorded) clearly shows this section to represent the remains of the earlier stable block built by 1683; the plan produced following the fire of 1718 (compare Figure 2 and Plate 1) clearly shows the same arrangement of apertures and even the projecting central section, and additional evidence confirming this is provided by the various plans and elevations of the period (see Plate 1 and Plate 2). The presence of mason's marks on the stonework of this phase is of interest as they are relatively similar in form to examples recorded from the local area at the same time (Tyson 1994). Indeed, Mason's Mark 2 is essentially identical to one recorded on stone in a barn at Sockbridge Hall near Penrith, although the mason responsible has not been identified with any certainty (*op cit*, 10).

5.1.3 **Phase 2 (1806-1814):** the great phase of rebuilding that created the present castle evidently resulted in the construction of the elements that form the present sculpture gallery (compare Figure 2 and Plate 1). This area clearly formed the junction between the existing service buildings and the new castle, with the western wall of Rooms 1, 2 and 3 and the majority of the elements comprising Room 4 having been added at this time. While the poor condition of Rooms 1 and 2 make detailed discussion of the features that this incorporated difficult in these areas, it is apparent within Room 4 that very high quality of workmanship was employed. The ribbed plaster ceiling with bosses and other decorative elements is thought to be the work of Bernasconi. However, what is noticeable is that the narrow engaged stone columns with octagonal bases on which this rests is very reminiscent of the work of the Websters of Kendal. Similar work is evident at Conishead Priory (who took over work in the early 1820s; Greenlane Archaeology 2009), and on a smaller scale at Holme Park near Kendal (also probably in the early 19th century; Greenlane Archaeology 2007). Certainly the Websters are known to have been providing architectural services to the Lowther family, at Lowther Castle and at their other estates, particularly in Whitehaven (Martin 2004, 15). Francis Webster was already working at Lowther Castle when Robert Smirke was appointed to rebuild it, and Smirke '*was probably glad to find [Francis] Webster with his experience and local connections, and kept him on as architect as well as mason and supplier of marble chimneypieces*' (*ibid*). It seems likely, therefore, that Webster was also responsible for some of the design of the rebuilding otherwise attributed to Smirke, even if only some of the details. Visible evidence relating to this phase within the building largely comprises the long main gallery forming Rooms 3 and 4, but also the blocking of the earlier windows and doorways belonging to Phase 1 in the east elevation. The form of the roofing during this period is not clear throughout. The roof of the sculpture gallery proper, with its ribbed plaster ceiling, has survived as have elements to the north in Rooms 2 and 3, but only the scars for joist holes were evident at the far north end (Room 1). These do, however, show that the ceiling was positioned at about first floor level while the area above was exposed to the elements and the walls rendered and with windows looking over the roof. At least part of Room 1 also seems to have had a basement beneath it, which was probably created during this phase, but was accessed from and so presumably used primarily by the adjoining stables. The presence of the bases of

the Phase 1 windows extending into this area indicates that the floor level was also altered, probably when the castle was rebuilt in Phase 2.

5.1.4 Some elements apparently belonging to this phase are more difficult to interpret. The row of three doorways between the passageway at the north end (Room 1) and what would have been the interior of the castle proper are almost medieval in appearance, and are typical of the arrangement of a 12th – 14th century hall house, albeit very tall. This is presumably the result of a deliberate use of Gothic styles and motifs within Smirke's design, but it seems a remarkably accurate rendition for the period. In addition, there are large areas of brick construction within the west elevation as recorded (originally an internal wall of the castle proper), typically forming flues for chimneys but also used elsewhere. The bricks used are of interest because they are extremely thin and hand made, and seemingly therefore too early for the rebuilding of 1806-1814; bricks of this type could easily be late medieval or early post-medieval in date (Hartley 1974), and must certainly predate the largely automated production through extrusion that became the norm during the second half of the 19th century (Hammond 2001, 14). However, bricks in this area in the early 19th century would perhaps be likely to be fairly crude, brick making technology potentially not being as advanced as elsewhere in the country, so these do not necessarily present any great difficulty in interpretation.

5.1.5 **Phase 3 (1860s):** it is not immediately apparent what purpose the elements now forming the sculpture gallery were originally put to, although it would seem implausible that they were not in fact constructed for the purpose of displaying the Lowther family's collection of antiquities; they must already have had a substantial number of statues by the end of the 17th century. By the 1860s the available documentary sources indicate that the gallery had been substantially altered, although it would appear from the evidence within the building that any changes were mostly confined to the passage at the north end (perhaps only Room 1). Within this area a series of niches were clearly hacked into existing plaster, which had presumably been added in Phase 2 to hide the blocked windows and doorways from Phase 1, to house a large collection of inscribed pieces of stone, altars and the like, many of which had been accumulated from Roman sites in the local area. The primary force behind this change of emphasis, to local antiquities rather than international, seems to have been the 2nd Lord Lonsdale, who was a keen collector of art works and china and a successful businessman (The Landscape Agency 2002, 11). He was clearly much more than just a collector and was actively investigating, or rather sponsoring the investigation of, local sites of archaeological interest. In general this phase probably saw relatively few physical alterations, although it is possible that the doorways in the west and north elevations of Room 1 were blocked at this time as access arrangements were changed, although this could have been carried out later. It has not been possible to compile a detailed list of the inscriptions housed within this wall as the available sources are not specific; indeed in some cases they are remarkably vague!

5.1.6 The importance of this phase is perhaps not so much its place in the physical development of Lowther Castle, as its connection to the collection of antiquities housed in the museum or gallery created at this time. These must have represented a substantial amount of material, evidently including at least one item of prehistoric date (an axe), several Roman inscriptions and other sculptured stone, and important early medieval carved stone objects. The local connections of these items are particularly significant, especially as they all appear to have been subsequently dispersed. Arguably the most important group; the three *reiter* stones, two lions, altars, and further sculptured stone from Kirkby Thore is now in the British Museum (Edwards 2011, 139; The British Museum 2011). The 'sculptured stones' from near Lowther Church are most likely the two (or more) fragments of carved cross found, together with a considerable number of pieces of similar date, on a mound known as 'the Quale' in Lowther churchyard (reported by Simpson (1877, 11); Bailey and Cramp 1988, 127-130). These were certainly present in Lowther Castle when the RCHME survey was carried out (RCHME 1936, 160; and confirmed by additional notes on microfilm held at CRO(K)). The RCHME also describe '*a large number of worked and moulded stones from Shap Abbey and other buildings in the neighbourhood*' as being present in the grounds (*ibid*). The pieces formerly at Lowther were seemingly subsequently sold to a J Hunt at the 1947 sale, and acquired from him by the British Museum in 1968 (Bailey and Cramp 1988, 127-130). The few early photographs that do exist of the inscriptions *in situ* in the wall (Plate 6 to Plate 9) depict too restricted an area to allow any meaningful reconstruction of the original arrangement, although it is

tempting to place the large altars shown in some the large niches present in the wall (see Figure 4). It is not now clear, however, how many more niches might have been present to the north.

5.1.7 Other items are more difficult to identify and may be entirely unpublished. Of particular interest is the cross from Bowness in Cumberland, presumably Bowness-on-Solway, which does not appear to have been previously reported (assuming it is a cross of early medieval date there is nothing listed by Bailey and Cramp (1988)), the rings found on a skeleton excavated at Sleagill, and the bronze Saxon 'misal'. This description is difficult to interpret; the term 'misal', more typically written 'missal', is usually used to describe a type of prayer book used for celebrating mass, but as it is said to have been bronze this could be referring to a mount of similar type to one previously housed in the Crosthwaite Museum in Keswick and now in the British Museum (see O'Sullivan 1990, 146; 1993, 27-28). Given that the mount from the Crosthwaite Museum was said to be 'from Cumberland' it is tempting to think that they might be one and the same, but this would appear to be impossible since the British Museum acquired theirs in 1870 and the one at Lowther is recorded in 1879.

5.1.8 Of particular interest from this phase is the inscription preserved in plaster remaining in one of the niches. This has been exposed to the weather for some time and as a result is in a poor condition and an attempt to take a rubbing, while succeeding to some extent, removed part of the upper surface. A reading of the inscription is difficult. It has been suggested that it might be an impression of one identified as No. 770 in the Roman Inscriptions of Britain (RIB), found in Kirkby Thore in 1860 and known to have been housed in Lowther Castle (David Shotter pers comm). However, the size does not appear to be match for this; indeed, there are apparently no inscriptions in the RIB volumes that are an exact match. The first line would usually consist of the name of the deceased (only the letters H, I, and C can be clearly discerned, apparently then followed by 'IA', possibly with an N after); the second line would have the age at death; the third line the executor's name (possibly 'MAT[ER]', his mother); and the fourth line another name or funerary formula (Roger Tomlin pers comm). It is apparent that the inscription must have been on the rear side of another, perhaps more visually impressive, piece, which was re-used for a second inscription; this secondary inscription being less decorative, it was relegated to the back when the slab was displayed on the wall. The provenance of the inscription is uncertain. As described in *Section 3.1.8* the Lowther Castle collection contained many imports as well as locally derived items, and it is impossible without identifying the inscription, to know whether this is one of the former or one of the latter. The only remaining intact and presumably *in situ* piece of sculpture within the gallery is the grave cover attached to the east wall of Room 1. This was first recorded in 1882, at which time it was said to be at Lowther Castle, although more recently its location was considered to be 'unknown' (Ryder 2005, 36). Ryder describes the decoration as comprising '*a straight-armed cross with cusped arms and an elaborate fleur-de-lys terminals, with two roses above, and below what look like the upper sections of two shields, that on the left with a lion rampant and that on the right with five rings*' (*ibid*). The five rings are part of the Lowther family crest.

5.1.9 **Phase 4 (20th century):** more recent alterations are primarily concerned with the decay to the structure that took place following the removal of the roof from the main part of the castle in the 1940s and 1950s. However, it is evident from the basement that some alterations were carried out, most probably in the early 20th century, specifically the replacement of the original floor with a concrete slab supported by iron beams. The purpose of this alteration is unclear but it was presumably carried out before the castle was abandoned. The other main alteration that took place in this phase, which also relates to the abandonment and decay of the structure, is the removal of the inscriptions and other fragments inserted into the east wall of Room 1. Although it is not clear exactly when this was carried out, and while it caused relatively little structural alteration, it does arguably represent the first stage in the subsequent decay and deterioration of the building, which saw the eventual collapse of the roof over the northern part of the sculpture gallery and considerable water ingress, which in turn presumably led to the loss of the plaster from the northern end of the east elevation of Room 1. By the time the building recording was carried out renovation work had already started and a new concrete floor had been added within Room 1.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 The sculpture gallery forms an important part of the extant remains of Lowther Castle, not only because it forms a clear link between the late 17th century Lowther II and the early 19th century rebuilding of Lowther III, and one of the few if not only places where their relationship can still be seen, but it also housed an important collection of local and international antiquities. Although these are no longer *in situ* the historical information provides some indication of what this collection contained, and where some of it was ultimately deposited following the closure of the castle, as well as some detail of how it was organised. This is, however, frustratingly incomplete when compared with the evidence on site, specifically the niches in the east wall of the north corridor. It is possible that further research might elucidate this further.

5.2.2 With regard to the Roman inscription preserved in the plaster of one of the niches, it would be a relatively lengthy task to ascertain whether it has ever been published and it is not expected that it will have been (Roger Tomlin pers comm). It is recommended that additional specialist photography be carried out with photographs taken at ninety degrees under better lighting conditions and in infra-red, which might improve the chances of reading the inscription (Roger Tomlin pers comm).

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