

## St Bride's, Douglas – A family mausoleum

Mary Markus\*

### ABSTRACT

*The church of St Bride's, Douglas (NGR: NS 8359 3095), which is cared for by Historic Scotland, contains an impressive series of tombs and memorials to members of the Douglas family. Three of these tombs, dating from the second quarter of the 14th century to the mid-15th century, take the form of recesses, and are set with in the north and south walls of the choir. The architecture of the earliest of the three shows an awareness of the work of late 13th/early 14th-century English court masons, while the canopies of the other two are more closely related to major Scottish building campaigns, notably at Melrose and possibly at Lincluden. The scope of the sources for all three tombs is a reflection of the status of their patrons, and the very high quality of the effigies emphasizes their high social standing.*

### INTRODUCTION

During January 2003, a programme of conservation was begun by Historic Scotland at St Bride's Church, Douglas, with particular emphasis on the tomb recesses and effigies there. Because of problems resulting from the dampness of the building, three of the effigies were removed to Historic Scotland's conservation centre at South Gyle. This removal provided a useful opportunity to examine the effigies in greater detail than would normally have been the case. A summary of the conservation processes can be found in the appendix at the end of this paper.

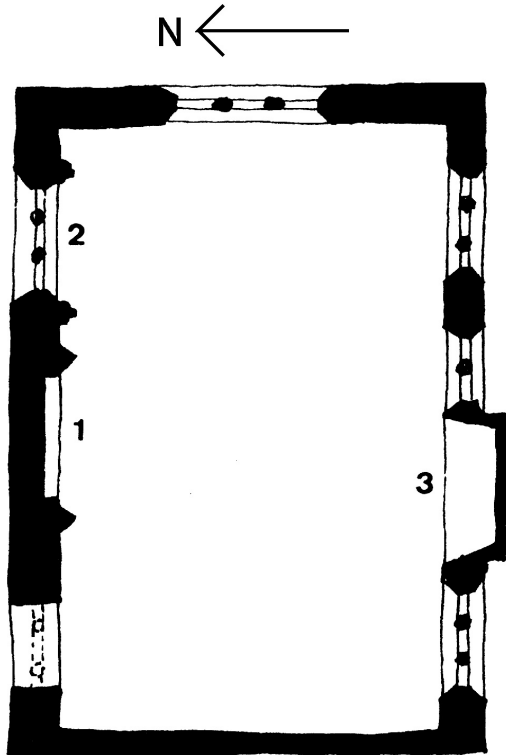
### IDENTITY & COMMEMORATION

The identification of those commemorated in the three tomb recesses at Douglas is greatly assisted by the work of David Hume of Godscroft, whose history of the Douglas family was compiled in late 16th century, and published in the first quarter of the 17th century.<sup>1</sup> In this

account, he records the dates of the decease of those commemorated and their burials in St Bride's Church. Even more usefully, he was able to read the (now illegible) inscriptions on tomb-chests in two of the three recesses, and these were also recorded in his history.<sup>2</sup> From this valuable information, the names of those associated with the three tomb recesses emerge as James Douglas, also known as James the Good (d 1330), Archibald fifth Earl of Douglas (d 1438), and James seventh Earl of Douglas, also known as James the Gross (d 1443) together with his wife, Beatrice de Sinclair.<sup>3</sup> By placing all three tombs in the church choir, the patrons were effectively turning the space into a family mausoleum, and various similarities of detail, discussed below, help to reinforce this impression (illus 1).

All that remains of the present church is the choir, the west end of which has been blocked-up to create a self-contained space. Part of a south nave aisle, and a (blocked-up) south nave arcade are also still standing, and from the details of these, it is clear that this part of

\* 45 Kessington Road, Bearsden, Glasgow G61 2HJ

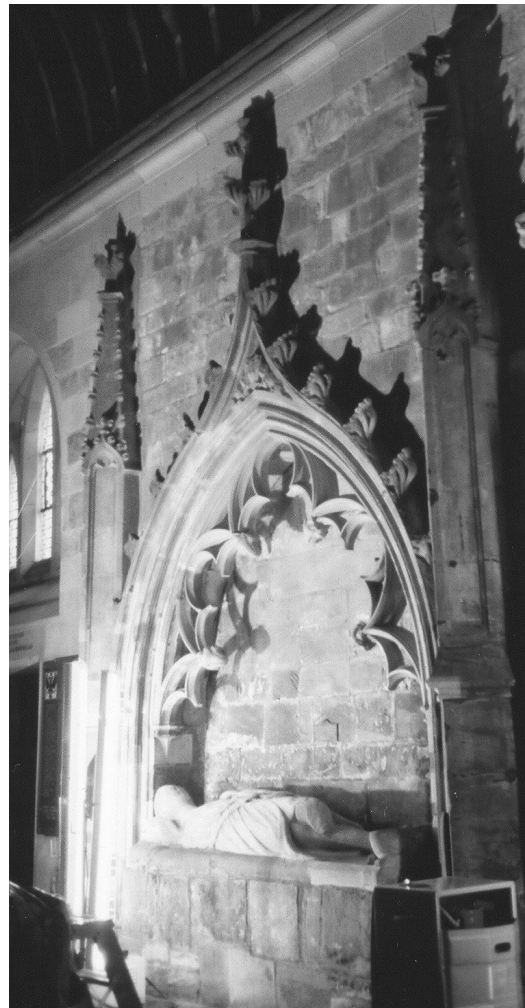


ILLUS 1 Plan of St Bride's church, Douglas (choir only) showing location of tombs (not to scale): 1 tomb of James the Good; 2 tomb of Archibald, fifth Earl of Douglas; 3 tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas, and his wife, Beatrice

the church, which dates back to the early 13th century, was, even at this early date, finished to a high degree. The capitals still in place on two of the octagonal columns of the nave arcade are of a very high quality, one with a finely-moulded bell capital, and the other with part of a waterleaf capital still visible. *Ex situ* capitals, currently displayed at the west end of the choir, have been dated even earlier, to the late 12th century, and these too have very fine carved details, including carved heads, palm-leaves, and other stylized foliage forms.<sup>4</sup> It has been stated elsewhere that the choir is a substantially later addition to the church, perhaps as late as 1380–90, but, given its very plain nature, there is little evidence to support this view.<sup>5</sup> The windows are formed by lancets grouped under pointed arches, and

the mouldings of these are simply worked with chamfers. Windows of a similar design can be seen in the south nave aisle of Paisley Abbey, dated mid-13th-century, and, on a larger scale, in the nave aisles of Dunblane Cathedral, dated mid-12th to mid-13th-century. A similar date, of the mid-13th century, is therefore proposed for the Douglas choir.

The choice by the Douglas tomb-builders of recessed monuments, rather than free-standing types of tomb, served a dual purpose, associating the burials physically with the



ILLUS 2 Tomb of James lord Douglas, also known as James the Good (d 1330)



ILLUS 3 Effigy of James lord Douglas

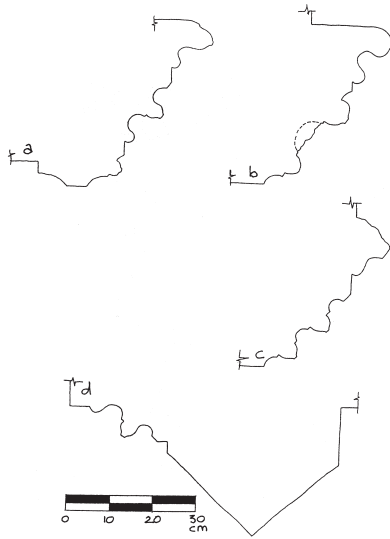
church fabric, thereby ensuring continuity of identity and commemoration, and underlining the identification of the Douglas family as tomb- and church-patrons. The sense of the importance of marking post mortem identity and status was heightened in the case of what would probably have been the third tomb to be built, that of James and Beatrice, since not only was the deceased earl commemorated, but also his wife and children who were still living at the time of his death.<sup>6</sup> Representation on the tomb of another was probably seen as a way of attracting acts of devotion which could be accumulated during a lifetime, thereby ensuring an easier passage for the soul after death. At a more pragmatic level, an image on a tomb within a family burial church maintained an association with that family, and therefore a claim to any rights arising from that relationship.<sup>7</sup>

#### TOMB OF JAMES DOUGLAS (JAMES THE GOOD), d 1330

The earliest of the three canopied tombs at Douglas, set in the north wall, has no inscription,

but, as noted above, it is probably that of James the Good, who died in 1330, whose burial in the church was recorded by Hume (illus 2). Of the three recesses, this is the only one which, at first sight, gives the impression of being contemporary with the wall in which it is set. The back wall of the recess is set back from the plane of the wall around it, but there is no sign of disturbance to the masonry, suggesting that the recess was planned for that location from the start. However, examination of the exterior of the church provides evidence of a blocked-up window arch corresponding to the position of the recess on the interior, which indicates that some kind of rebuilding was necessary when the tomb was set up. Since the return of Sir James's body from Spain is documented by Barbour as having taken place shortly after his death, and since it appears from that account that the tomb was set up with little or no delay, the tomb is probably dated c1330–5.<sup>8</sup> The evidence of the blocked window, therefore, underlines the earlier date of the choir.

The effigy of James Douglas lies on a renewed tomb-chest, and although badly damaged, with



ILLUS 4 Tomb of James the Good, recess arch; b tomb of Archibald, fifth Earl of Douglas, recess arch; c tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas and Beatrice, recess jamb and hood-mould; d tomb of James the Good, recess jamb and adjacent buttress

the left leg broken off at the knee, and the right arm at the shoulder, is shown in an active, cross-legged pose (illus 3). Continuing this dynamic theme, the left hand grasps the scabbard, and from the remaining areas of damaged stone, the effigy was probably shown in the act of drawing the sword. The trend for cross-legged poses began in around 1250 and remained popular for at least another hundred years; therefore, if the Douglas effigy is contemporary with the tomb, it is a relatively late example of its type.<sup>9</sup> The effigy wears chain mail armour, although the surface has no indication of its texture, which may be due either to erosion or to the use of gesso which would have been stamped or incised to represent the mail. A long surcoat is worn over the armour, and buckled waist- and sword-belts gather it into realistic folds. The damaged animal crouching at the foot of the effigy was probably a lion, and is shown with its tail looped across its back.

The knight holds a blank shield in the left hand, so that any heraldry that might have been

painted on it would have been facing the back wall of the recess, and therefore not easily visible. It is possible that this side of the effigy was originally intended to be seen, since traces of eroded embroidery remain on the edge of the surcoat on that side. However, it is not unusual for knights carrying shields to be set within recesses in this manner, and it is possible that the Douglas effigy was simply the product of an effigy-making workshop – that is, standardized – and that, as in this case, heraldic identities would be established by other means. Here, the arch of the recess has a shield of the Douglas arms at its tip, bearing a heart below three stars, with polychromy still remaining on the shield, and on the two lions which support it.<sup>10</sup>

The recess itself is large and imposing, with an ogee-tipped arch, and, very strikingly, free-standing cusps and sub-cusps. These add an air of brittle insubstantiality to the tomb, casting shadows on the back wall, and appearing as a semi-transparent layer. This subtle mingling of tomb and architecture is continued and enhanced by the flanking buttresses, which are rotated, breaking up the usual rectangular setting of the building elements (illus 4d). Rotated buttresses are not often found in tomb design, and when they are, it often signifies that there has been some awareness of, or influence from, products of English royal workshops.<sup>11</sup> Those were characterized, *inter alia*, by an interest in polygonal and rotated forms, as seen for instance in the Eleanor crosses of the 1290s. Rotated buttresses can be found in the later recessed and canopied tombs of the Allard family, in the church of St Thomas the Martyr, Winchelsea (East Sussex). These date from 1320–30, and have canted side panels and rotated buttresses which emphasize the sculptural rather than the architectural nature of the tombs. Close parallels for the Allard tombs can be found in the tomb of Edmund Crouchback, dated 1296, at Westminster Abbey, probably carried out by the court mason, Michael of Canterbury.<sup>12</sup> The basic layout of the Westminster and Winchelsea tombs is similar, and although much earlier than





ILLUS 5 Tomb of Archibald, fifth Earl of Douglas (d 1438); composite photograph

the Douglas tomb, they share many decorative details, including traceried pinnacles, gables and cusping.

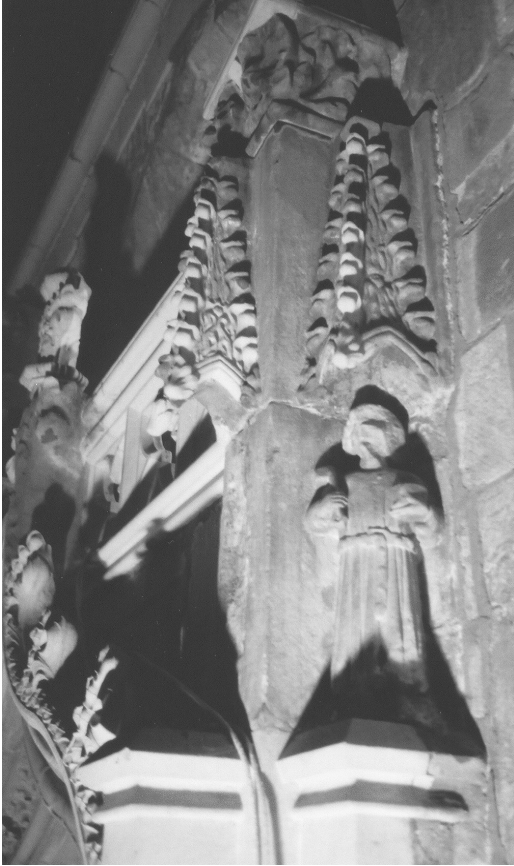
#### THE TOMB OF ARCHIBALD, FIFTH EARL OF DOUGLAS, d 1438

This tomb is set to the east of that of James, and was probably under construction in 1435–40. Although much of the tomb canopy has been restored, it appears to follow the original design accurately (illus 5). In contrast to the tomb of James the Good, this is a much more substantial design, but still retains a degree of transparency, with a quatrefoil parapet spanning between the flanking pinnacles, and running across the window behind, and behind the tip of the ogee-arched recess. This is another feature that can be linked to products of royal workshops. Although much earlier (probably c 1325–30) this motif is seen in the palace of

Westminster, in St Stephen's Chapel, where, in the upper chapel, a crenellated parapet above a row of quatrefoils runs above the pointed window arches. Even closer in appearance and function, as well as date, is the tester above the tomb of Edward III in Westminster Abbey, dated c 1386.<sup>13</sup> The tester also has a quatrefoil parapet set behind, in this case, a series of gabled arches. However, it is not necessary to consider these English precedents as having directly influenced the tomb-builder at Douglas. Melrose Abbey is another site with Douglas family connections. As noted below, William, first Earl of Douglas founded a chantry there, at the altar of St Bride, in reparation for having killed, in 1353, his uncle, William Douglas of Liddesdale. Not only was the body of William of Liddesdale buried at Melrose, in front of the altar of St Bridget, but on his decease in 1384, so was that of the first earl.<sup>14</sup>

Some of the late 14th/early 15th-century work at Melrose has decorative elements which could have been a source for the quatrefoil parapet of Archibald's tomb. In the presbytery at Melrose, as well as in the choir, quatrefoil parapets are used to span across the lower parts of the clerestorey windows. Here they are seen as a semi-transparent layer, set on the inner plane of the wall, with the descending mullions of the clerestorey windows visible behind, closely resembling the arrangement above the tomb at Douglas.

Possible English precedents for the quatrefoil parapet at Douglas, (and therefore for the earlier examples at Melrose) have already been mentioned, and can also be found for other aspects at Melrose, such as the series of niches around the east window and south transept window, with earlier English designs, such as Howden's east end, and the eastern elevation of the Ely Lady Chapel, showing clear similarities.<sup>15</sup> These English examples are, however, much earlier than both the Melrose facades and the quatrefoil parapet of the Douglas tomb canopy, and the tomb design is therefore more likely to have been derived indirectly from



ILLUS 6 Tomb of Archibald, easterly pinnacle

English sources, probably arriving at Douglas via Melrose.

Unlike James's tomb, Archibald's seems to have been considered as a platform for sculptural decoration. Each flanking buttress therefore has two niches intended to contain small figures (one is now missing), with the figures of St Andrew and a woman (probably St Bride) on the western buttress. The figure of St Peter is contained in one niche in the eastern buttress, and it is likely that the image of St Paul would originally have been set within the other, unoccupied niche (illus 6).<sup>16</sup> The sculptural theme continues along the arch of the recess, which has a foliage trail carved along a hollow chamfer, and naturalistic foliage (vine leaves with bunches of grapes, and hawthorn or sycamore leaves) is carved around



ILLUS 7 Tomb of Archibald, back wall of recess

the lower stages of the buttresses. A panel, still bearing traces of pink and gold paint, is set into the back wall of the recess, with a kneeling figure – the deceased – hands raised in prayer, beside an altar on which a book lies (illus 7).<sup>17</sup> The shield and scroll carved above the figure are now blank, but would originally have had painted heraldry and text.

The effigy has a large, and somewhat out-of-proportion head resting on two cushions, and is shown with the eyes open. Unusually, the effigy is not shown wearing armour, but in secular robes and wearing a coronet. The long gown has a high collar, and a broad and very ornate belt (illus 8) The sleeves of the gown terminate in loose cuffs, and the right hand is broken away, but from damage to the front of the effigy, it would probably have held the tasselled cord of the embroidered cloak. The left hand remains, however, holding a staff of office, and the feet rest on a lion.

The edge of the tomb slab is chamfered and carries an inscription which is now illegible, but was transcribed by David Hume of Godscroft as follows:



ILLUS 8 Tomb of Archibald, detail of effigy

Hic jacet Dominus Archibaldus Douglas Dux Turoniae, Comes de Douglas, et Longaville Dominus Gallovidiae, Et Wigtoun et Annandiae, locum tenens Regis Scotiae. Obiit 26 die mensis Junij. An Dominj Millesmo, quadringentesimo tricesimo secundo.<sup>18</sup>

Here lies Lord Archibald of Douglas, Duke of Touraine, Earl of Douglas and of Longueville, Lord of Galloway and of Wigtown and Annandale, lieutenant of the King of Scotland. Died on the 26th day of the month of June, in the year of Our Lord 1432.

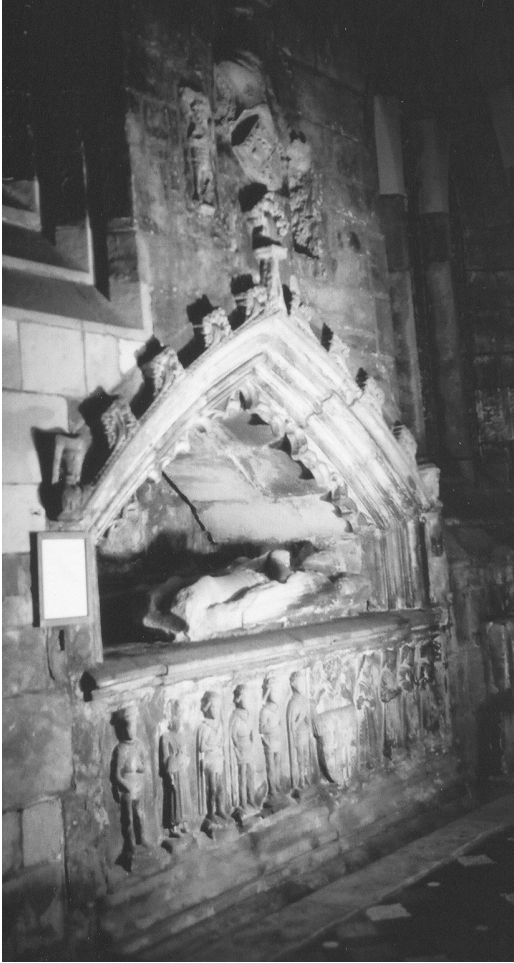
The tomb-chest below is another vehicle for sculptural decoration: it is divided into six

canopied panels, five of which contain a small figure (illus 9). (The sixth panel has been restored and the associated figure is now missing.) The remaining figures stand on small crenellated plinths, and each is flanked by a shield on one side and a scroll on the other. Although these shields and scrolls are now blank, they would probably originally have been painted with heraldic devices and texts. Each figure wears a different costume and stands in a slightly different pose – hands clasped in front, tucked into waist-belt, praying, etc, and may have been intended to represent the children of this duke, as is the case with the figures on the tomb-chest



ILLUS 9 Tomb of Archibald, tomb-chest detail





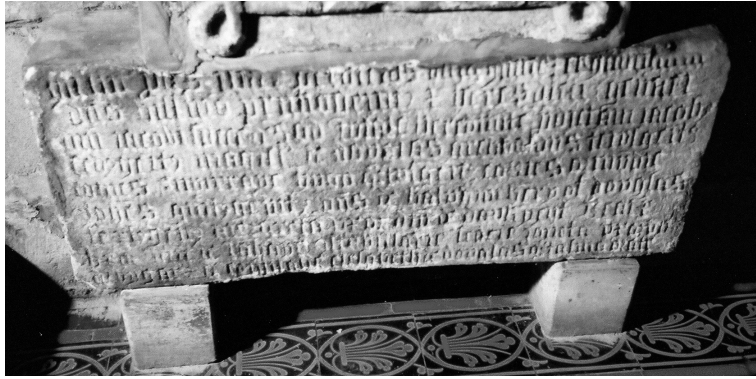
ILLUS 10 Tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas (d 1443), and his wife Beatrice de Sinclair

in the opposite recess, of Sir James, seventh Earl of Douglas and his wife Beatrice, discussed below. The panels are separated from each other by central pinnacled buttresses flanked on each side by a smaller, rotated buttress – a small-scale version of the main buttresses on the tomb of James the Good, and another possible reference to English court influence. Another court motif can be found on the canopies above these small figures, each of which is formed by a pair of gables set in front of a row of panelling. Again this motif can be seen in both St Stephen's Chapel where, in the upper chapel, the pointed window

arches are set against a paneled background, and in the tester of the tomb of Edward III.<sup>19</sup> However, by the time the Douglas tomb was under construction, this motif had become widely adopted, and again Melrose Abbey shows precedents. The arch of the doorway into the south transept, dated c 1400, is set against a series of panels. This feature recurs at Lincluden, in the tomb of Princess Margaret, wife of the fourth Earl of Douglas. She died in 1450, but her involvement at Lincluden probably began in the 1420s, and in 1429 she provided for a chaplain there.<sup>20</sup> Her endowment may have marked the beginning of an ambitious programme of work, involving the rebuilding of the choir with her own magnificent tomb recess in its north wall. The arch of Margaret's tomb recess is set against a row of panelling, as are the arches of the sedilia and piscina on the opposite side of the choir. In a sense, the arch and panelling combination can be seen as an extension of the design of the east and south elevations at Melrose, where the series of niches surrounding the large arched windows resemble a more sculptural treatment of the same motifs.

The most probable links between Melrose and Lincluden, and possibly St Bride's, are the patronage of the Douglas family and the career of the French designer, John Morow. His work at Melrose, from around 1385–1420s, as well as his previous commissions are listed on an inscribed stone in the south transept there. Among these works the name 'Nyddysdayll' (Nithsdale) occurs, which is probably a reference to Lincluden, sited close to the River Nith.<sup>21</sup> Although there is no evidence to suggest that Morow was ever directly involved at St Bride's, work on the choir at Lincluden, probably including the tomb of Princess Margaret, Archibald's mother, was probably under way shortly before Archibald's death. If that was indeed the case, then Archibald, a few years before his decease in 1438, could have arranged for his own tomb to be set up in Douglas, and may well have wanted to reflect the design of his mother's very opulent monument then under





ILLUS 11 Inscribed stone panel from tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas

construction at Lincluden. In any case, Archibald would certainly have been aware of Morow's work, if not at Lincluden, then at Melrose, and would have had an understandable desire to demonstrate this at Douglas.<sup>22</sup>

#### THE TOMB OF JAMES, SEVENTH EARL OF DOUGLAS, d 1443, & HIS WIFE BEATRICE DE SINCLAIR

The third tomb recess is set on the south side of the choir, and contains the effigies of the seventh earl and his wife (illus 10). In contrast to the north side of the choir, where the window behind the tomb of James the Good was blocked-up, there are signs on the exterior of the south wall of the choir that an interruption to the window spacings was intended from the outset. The windows in this wall are of a similar size to those in the opposite north wall, but unlike them, are not evenly spaced, with a larger section of wall between the two windows flanking the recess, than between the windows to the east of it. There is no sign of disturbance to the wall around these windows, and they are probably therefore in their original positions. This section of wall may have originally accommodated a doorway, and when other family tombs were set up in the choir, the generous spacing of the windows was seen as an opportunity to insert another Douglas monument.

The inscription on the chamfered edge of the tomb-chest, referring to the couple, though now mostly illegible, was transcribed by David Hume. He also transcribed the lettering on a stone slab, now separated from the tomb but probably originally set in the restored section of wall immediately to the east of it, which continues the record of identities with a list of the earl's ten children, each of whom is depicted as a weeper figure on the tomb-chest (illus 11).<sup>23</sup> The inscriptions are given as follows:

*Hic jacet magnus et potens princeps Dominus Jacobus de Douglas, Comes de Douglas, Dominus Annandiae, et Gallovidiae, Jedburgh Forestiae, et Dominus de [blank], Magnus Wardenus Regni Scotiae versus Angliam, etc, Qui obiit vicesimo quarto die mensis Martii, Anno Domini millesimo quadringentesimo quadragesimo tertio.*<sup>24</sup>

Here lies the great and powerful Lord James of Douglas, Count of Douglas, Lord of Annandale, and of Galloway, Jedburgh Forest and Lord of [blank], Great Warden of the king of Scotland against the English, etc., who died 24th day of March, in the year of the lord 1443.

*Hic jacet Domina Beatrix de Sinklar, filia Domini Henrici Comitis Orcadum, Domini de Sinkler, etc, Comitissa de Douglas et Aveniae, Domina Gallovidiae.*<sup>25</sup>

Here lies Lady Beatrice de Sinclair, daughter of Lord Henry Count of Orkney, Lord of Sinclair, etc, Countess of Douglas and Avondale, Lady of Galloway.



ILLUS 12 Tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas; detail of recess apex and wall above.

Hae sunt proles inter predictos Dominum et Dominam generati Dominus Villelmus primogenitus et heres dicti Domini Jacobi, succedens ad totam hereditatem predictam. Jacobus secundus genitus Magister de Douglas, Archibaldus, tercius genitus Comes Murrave, Hugo quartus genitus Comes Ormundie, Johannes quintus genitus Dominus de Balvenii, Henricus, sextus genitus. Margareta, uxor Domini de Dalkayet, Beatrix uxor Domini de la Haye, Constabularii Scocie, Joneta uxor Domini de Biggar et de Comernald, Elizabeth de Douglas quarta filia erat.<sup>26</sup>

These are the progeny of the foresaid Lord and Lady, Lord William, the firstborn and heir of the said Lord James, succeeding to the whole estate of the foresaid, James the second-born, master of Douglas, Archibald the third-born, count of Moray, Hugh the fourth-born, count of Orkney, John the fifth-born, lord of Balvenie, Constable of Scotland, Margaret wife of the lord of Dalkeith, Beatrice wife of Lord Hay, Constable of Scotland, Janet wife of the lord of Biggar and Cumbernauld, Elizabeth the fourth daughter.



ILLUS 13 Effigy of James, seventh Earl of Douglas

If the third inscription is contemporary with the tomb, then the monument must have been erected after the earl's death, by his widow, between 1448, when Archibald was made Earl of Moray, and 1451, when his eldest son, James, was killed.<sup>27</sup> The fact that Beatrice's inscription omits any date of decease emphasizes her survival as the earl's widow.

This third recess is the most solid-looking of the three at Douglas, and since it has to accommodate two effigies, is very deep – so deep in fact that it was necessary to create an opening in the church wall to allow the tomb to project externally.<sup>28</sup> Internally, the arch of the recess is segmental, with small cusps and prominent crocketing. It is topped by a large



ILLUS 14 Tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas – detail of effigy





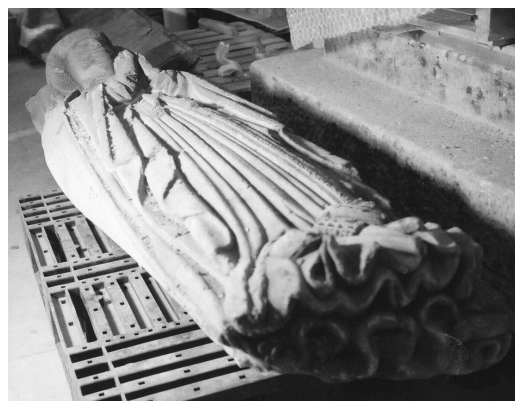
ILLUS 15 Tomb of Tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas – detail of effigy

finial, and in the wall above that there are a pair of niches, each with a short length of crenellated and foliated cornice above (illus 12) One of these is now empty and the other contains the figure of a man, apparently dressed in furs, and wielding a club. Above these niches is a shield with traces of red paint and the Douglas heart still visible. Finally, the whole thing is crowned by a very ornate helmet with a peacock on its upper edge. Its tail feathers curve realistically along the back edge of the helmet, and, in a faint echo of the previous two tombs, carved cords and ribbons attached to the helmet encroach on the wall surface on either side, serving to break up its solidity. The shield also has a length of crenellated and foliated cornice above it.

Unlike the two recesses in the north wall, this one has no flanking buttresses and is generally much simpler. However there are head-stops at either end of the crocketed upper edge of the arch, which almost certainly represent James and his wife. The westerly head, although rather eroded, is clearly male, and has shoulder-length hair, with a circlet around the head. He is shown wearing a garment with a high collar and an ornate chain across the shoulders, and some of these details are repeated in the knight's effigy

itself, with both head-stop and effigy shown bare-headed and wearing a circlet, and with an ornate chain at the neck. The female head-stop also has details which are echoed in the effigy, with a similar head-dress formed by an intricate net and veil, a choker at the neck, and with the dress having a deep V-neck and collar, worn above a close-fitting gown.<sup>29</sup>

The effigies themselves are extremely ornate, but badly damaged, especially that of the knight, the legs of which are broken at the knee, and which has suffered from both weathering, and



ILLUS 16 Effigy of Beatrice, wife of James, seventh Earl of Douglas





ILLUS 17 Detail of effigy of Beatrice

the damp condition of the recess (illus 13–15). The knight was originally in a straight-legged pose, and is shown wearing plate armour over chain-mail defences, which can be seen around the neck, and projecting below the hem-line of the tunic, the mail being indicated by a series of wavy, parallel lines. He is shown with his eyes open, and his hands in an attitude of prayer, clasping a small book. There may have been some attempt to characterize the effigy, as it is shown with rather large ears which are pushed forwards by the helmet on which his head rests. The knight also has two ornate waist-belts,

one for the sword and the other for a dagger, and a long cloak which is fastened at the neck by two tasselled cords. There has been great attention paid to the details of the armour, with three narrow straps over the right forearm, the carefully-depicted chain-mail, buckles fastening the leg defences over the thighs, and elbow plates which are just visible on each arm.

The woman's effigy is in a much better state than the knight's, and is more-or-less complete (illus 16–19). Like the knight, she is also shown with her eyes open, and her praying hands clasping a small book. Her head rests on



ILLUS 18 Detail of effigy of Beatrice



ILLUS 19 Detail of effigy of Beatrice

a pair of richly-decorated cushions, the lower one of which is fastened at the side by a criss-cross of ribbons, and has a rich tassel at each corner. Her feet rest on an animal, the head of which is broken, and which is also lying on a cushion. She wears a long flowing robe, with no waist-belt visible, which breaks in heavy, sharp-edged folds around her feet. The edges and hem-lines of this garment, and of her cloak, are decorated with embroidery, as are the cuffs of her dress, where the sleeves are gathered around the wrists. Just visible at the neck of the gown is an under-garment, laced up at the front. Her cloak, which is shown caught up under her forearms, is fastened with two tasselled cords, which extend down below her clasped hands, and are knotted together. Her hair is contained in an elaborate net, which forms a rectangular framework around her face, with a veil attached above the forehead, falling behind her head to her shoulders. Apart from her very rich clothing, the woman also wears some opulent jewellery, with a ring on her right hand, and a four-stranded choker with a pendant around her neck, as well as a slightly longer decorative chain.

All this rich sculptural and textural detail is continued in the tomb-chest below (illus 20). This is formed of five panels, and has ten small figures standing on pedestals and an angel holding a shield carved on it. Starting at the east

end of the tomb-chest, the first panel contains three male figures – a knight, a churchman and another knight; the second contains three more knights; the third contains the angel holding a heraldic shield, with traces of gold paint still remaining; the fourth has a single female figure wearing a layered head-dress, and the fifth panel has three more female figures, two of which also wear layered head-dresses, while the third is shown bare-headed apart from a circlet. The stance of the figures differs slightly, with the hands in a variety of poses – resting on a waist-belt, holding a cross around the neck, clasped in front, etc. The shield held by the angel has the arms of Douglas impaling those of Sinclair of Orkney, representing the marriage of James to Beatrice.<sup>30</sup> The identities of these ten figures are reflected in the inscription noted above, and the characterization of each figure corresponds to that inscription. Moreover, the figures and identities occur in the same order on both the tomb-chest and in the inscription, indicating that this panel did indeed originally come from the tomb recess.

#### LADY MARJORY ABERNETHY

Another effigy, which is earlier than all those in recesses, is that of a woman, probably Marjory Abernethy, and this now lies in the south-west corner of the church on a modern plinth. She married Hugh Douglas the younger (the uncle of Good Sir James of Douglas), in 1259, and her tomb may originally have been set up in the western part of the church, in the nave or aisle, but there are no remaining fragments of this monument.<sup>31</sup> Although there is no evidence that this effigy came from a recess, its relatively early date merits a brief account. The figure is very eroded, and is shown with the hands clasped in prayer, and with her cloak caught up beneath the elbows. Her feet rest on a damaged foliage plinth, and her head lies on a cushion. She wears several veils, with small pieces of hair protruding below her ears, and a wimple



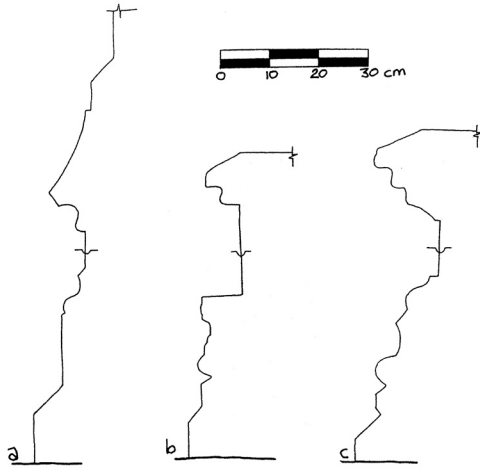
ILLUS 20 Tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas; detail of tomb-chest

below the chin suggesting that at the time the effigy was made she was a widow. Her long gown, which has no waist-belt, falls in smooth, rounded folds to her feet. This effigy is one of the three which were removed for conservation, and those processes are described below.

#### MOULDING PROFILES

So far as the form of the recesses and effigies are concerned, it can be seen that their placing and the fact that they are all in the form of recesses allow them to be viewed as a group. This cohesion is heightened when the mouldings are analysed, since, although the individual elements within each sequence are commonly found in contemporary monuments, the repetition of certain sequences, albeit with slight variations, reinforces the sense of a group identity. Although James the Good's tomb was probably set up in c 1330–40, and those of Archibald, and of James and Beatrice in 1435–40 and between 1448–51 respectively, the desire to unify the monuments

and hence to reinforce the concept of the choir as a Douglas family mausoleum would help to account for these similarities. These affinities can be detected in the arches of the recesses (illus 4a–c), where, in each case, the outermost order of the arch is followed by an ogee and a flat surface, and in the cases of the two James's tombs, by a straight chamfer, a hollow, a filleted roll and another hollow. In addition, a hollow chamfer is worked on the innermost order of each of the three arches where it adjoins the soffit leading to the back wall of the recess. One variation among these sequences occurs in the tomb of James the Good, which has additional fillets between the principal moulded elements, giving it a crisper-looking surface texture. Another aspect, which differentiates the tomb of James and Beatrice from the other two, is that in the profile of the recess arch, there is no longer a clear hierarchy of moulded forms. Instead, there is more of a sense of uniformity to the overall profile, with a lack of articulating elements in the sequence, which is typical of later medieval mouldings.



ILLUS 21 A buttress flanking tomb of James the Good, middle and base mouldings; b tomb of Archibald, fifth Earl of Douglas, tomb-chest; c tomb of James, seventh Earl of Douglas and Beatrice, tomb-chest

The similarities continue in the profiles of the two remaining original tomb-chests, those of Archibald and of James and Beatrice (illus 21b–c). The inscriptions on each are cut into the chamfered upper edge of the tomb slab, and the profile then continues with a series of rolls and hollows, forming an undulating surface. The bases of the tomb-chests are less obviously related, but do have a similar combination of a large roll-moulding followed by straight and angular surfaces. To an extent, the function of a tomb-chest determines the form of its profile, but in these two examples, there are sufficient unifying features to consider that their similarities could have been intended.

## CONCLUSION

The 14th- and 15th-century changes to the 13th-century choir at St Bride's were carried out with the intention of creating a family burial space, with the initial setting-up of the tomb of James the Good seen as the starting point of a sequence tomb-building operations. Tomb recesses were the ideal vehicle for this privatization of the

space, being fixed physically and permanently to the church fabric and therefore by association to church patronage. This group of tombs, belonging to the most powerful family in the parish, expressed their high local standing, and their overwhelming presence in the choir made a clear statement as to the extent of their piety, with the hope or expectation that the tombs would provide a focus for post-mortem prayer, easing the path of their souls to heaven. Expressions of kinship extended beyond the individuals actually buried there, to include family members who were still living at the time the tombs were set up. The forms of the tombs, and their similarities in carved and moulded detail, gave visual emphasis to these relationships, and all these features taken together provided the Douglas family with a lasting testament to their high status and their pious intentions as church- and tomb-patrons.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr Richard Fawcett and Peter Yeoman of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, Historic Scotland, have been kind enough to read and comment on various versions of this paper. Some of their ideas have been incorporated here, and any errors are the responsibility of the author. Staff at Historic Scotland's South Gyle stone conservation centre commented on, and provided valuable information for the conservation aspects of both the tombs and effigies. Christa Gerdwilker assisted with technical information regarding the stone conservation of both recesses and effigies, and Fiona Allardyce, Lauren Murdoch, and Lynda Robertson advised on various aspects of the paint conservation.

Historic Scotland has funded the writing of this paper, and provided a publication grant.

## APPENDIX: STONE & POLYCHROMY: INVESTIGATION & CONSERVATION

A report on the condition of the tombs and effigies was carried out by Colin Muir in 2002, and this revealed that the dampness of the building has resulted in substantial stone decay. By January 2003, some of the necessary conservation processes had





ILLUS 22 James, seventh Earl of Douglas, paint conservation (*Crown copyright: Historic Scotland*)

been completed, with the effigy of James the Good having been steam-cleaned, and the tomb-chest re-pointed using hydraulic lime mortar. Some of the masonry joints were also replaced on the tomb recess of Archibald Douglas. The tomb-chest of Lady Beatrice and her husband James was repointed by the Masonry Conservation Unit (MCU), as was the back wall of their recess, and both effigies were removed to South Gyle for cleaning, removal of earlier repairs, and consolidation.

When these effigies were examined ex-situ, that of the seventh earl was found to be in a particularly fragile state, with the helmet below his head broken along a previous fracture line, and the back requiring consolidation. Paint traces were found on both James and Beatrice, although much of this evidence was obscured by a surface crust caused by a combination of pollution and possibly a layer of mortar or lime-wash. Part of this encrustation on Beatrice's effigy was removed by laser cleaning, leaving the patina in place, but this could not be attempted for James's effigy because of the presence of extensive and unstable polychrome. As a result, the paint was stabilized prior to laser cleaning of the effigy in order to reduce specific areas with a thick pollution crust, mainly on the head and shoulders. This resulted in the exposure of some polychrome detail, and further analysis is due to be carried out (illus 22).

The back of the effigy of James Douglas was consolidated with injections of Paraloid B72 in

acetone, with small holes having been drilled to allow access to deeper areas. The back of the knight's head and the cushion on which it rests was repaired using polyester resin, and the joint filled with colour-matched acrylic mortar. This was also used to repair the delaminations and holes on the back of the effigy. Once dried, the back of the effigy was then brushed with latex, and layers of glass-fibre reinforced polyester resin were applied to this surface. When these layers had dried, they were removed, together with the latex, and traces of ammonia from the latex were removed from the effigy using water. The polyester resin is to be used as a support for the effigy when it is eventually transported back to the church and moved into the recess, and it will be replaced on lead sheeting within the recess.<sup>32</sup>

The third effigy removed for conservation is that of Lady Marjory Abernethy, now set on a modern plinth, and discussed briefly above. After the removal of the effigy, the cement pointing on the plinth was removed and replaced with hydraulic lime mortar. On initial examination of the effigy, no polychrome was detected, and attempts to remove salt efflorescence with sepiolite poultices were largely unsatisfactory. A desalination tank was then installed, and the effigy has undergone treatment, with the amount of salt ions being measured by testing the conductivity of the water at the beginning and end of each desalination cycle. Following the desalination processes, the effigy was still very dirty and stained, especially around the

head, and gentle steam cleaning to remove surface layers of dirt was therefore carried out, revealing traces of polychrome in some of the drapery folds. This steam cleaning was followed by laser cleaning to remove additional pollution stains. The effigy has now been returned to the church, and has been replaced on lead sheeting on its plinth.

As far as the recesses themselves are concerned, the dampness of the building, although much improved following repairs to the walls, still poses problems in ascertaining how the flaking paint there should be conserved. Frequently vegetable- or animal-based adhesives would be used to reattach loose flakes, but in this environment these might lead to mould growth. Certain synthetic adhesives might also perform badly in such a damp environment, so in situ trials will be necessary before consolidation of the paint on the recesses is carried out.

## NOTES

- 1 Reid 1996; Fraser 1885, vol 1, lviii.
- 2 Reid 1996, vol 1, 125; vol 2, 317, 347–9. St Bride or Bridget was the patron saint of the Douglas family, and various members chose to emphasize their link with the saint. A chantry of St Bridget was founded by James the Good, on the feast of St Bride, 1329, at Newbattle Abbey. The collegiate church of St Bride at Bothwell was another Douglas foundation, and a chantry of St Bridget at Melrose Abbey, was endowed by William, first Earl of Douglas: Mackinlay 1914, 124–5, citing *Newbattle Register*, no 134, 100–1; *ibid*, 126; Irving 1864, vol 2, 73.
- 3 Fraser 1885, vol 1, 414.
- 4 Cameron 1998, 98–101; Markus 2003, vol 1.
- 5 MacGibbon & Ross 1896, vol 2, 520 give the choir a late 14th century date, perhaps following Irving 1864, vol 2, 54, or Fraser 1885, vol 2, 620. A valuable site meeting and discussion with Richard Fawcett and Peter Yeoman clarified the dating of the choir for this paper, and therefore the sequence of subsequent building operations.
- 6 Irving 1864, vol 2, 92.
- 7 These themes are discussed in detail in Markus 1994.
- 8 Barbour, writing in the late 14th century, describes how, after the death of James lord Douglas in Spain, his bones were taken back to Scotland, and ‘were buried in the Kirk of Douglas, with mourning and much sorrow. Sir Archibald his son then had a rich tomb made of alabaster, fair and beautiful, as was appropriate for such a worthy’: Duncan 1997, book 20, lines 580–600, pp 770–3.
- 9 Kempe 1980, 20, 22 gives early and late examples.
- 10 Reid 1996, vol 2, 121, the device of the heart seems to have been adopted by the Douglas family in reference to the deathbed request of Robert I, that his heart should be carried to Jerusalem by this James lord of Douglas, and should be buried there.
- 11 In general, and on a larger scale, interest in polygonal forms extended over a lengthy period, and could be found in chapter houses such as that at Westminster Abbey, begun in c 1246, in the Ely octagon of the second quarter of the 14th century, and in Henry VII’s early 16th-century chapel at Westminster. On a smaller scale, polygonal buttresses can be found in, for example, the late 13th-century, flanking the east facade of Elgin Cathedral.
- 12 Harvey 1987, 45; Hastings 1955, 87, n 4 refers to similarities between Winchelsea and St Stephen’s chapel; Salzman 1920, 126–41 provides some historical background on the Allard family.
- 13 Illustrated in Hastings, 1955, pl 24, 41. Harvey 1987, 361 suggests Henry Yevele as the tomb’s designer.
- 14 Irving 1864, vol 2, 73; *Complete Peerage*, vol 4, 431.
- 15 Fawcett 1994, 32 discusses the relationships between Melrose, Ely and Howden.
- 16 The probability of the missing figure being that of St Paul was suggested by Peter Yeoman, noting that the saint was regularly paired with St Peter.
- 17 Fiona Allardyce suggests that the pink colour may be the result of mixing vermilion – an expensive colour – with white, in order to eke it out.
- 18 Reid 1996, vol 2, 317.
- 19 Hastings 1955, pl 27, 41 illustrates both the upper chapel and the tomb tester.
- 20 McDowall 1886, 67; Fawcett 2002, 316 compares her tomb at Lincluden with that of Archibald, fifth Earl, at Douglas.
- 21 Richardson & Wood 1949, 10; Dalrymple et al 1899, vol 10, 99.
- 22 There may be a further link between the Douglas family and Morow, at Whithorn, where, in 1424, Archibald the fourth Earl of Douglas and his wife, Margaret, endowed a chapel. Since Galloway appears in the list of sites at Melrose where

- Morow had worked, this may refer to Whithorn, although there is no remaining evidence of such a chapel there now: Fawcett 2002, 347.
- 23 Fraser 1885, vol 2, 623–4 gives a fuller version of the inscribed slab.
  - 24 Reid 1996, vol 2, 348.
  - 25 Ibid, vol 2, 348.
  - 26 Fraser 1885, vol 2, 623–4.
  - 27 Irving 1864, vol 2, 93.
  - 28 Muir 2002, 17, suggests that water ingress from this external projection may be the cause of much of the damp problem within the recess and on the effigies. Repointing of this has greatly improved the condition of the interior.
  - 29 Scott 1987, 19–23, discusses the costumes of both the female effigy and the weeper figures on the tomb-chest; Newton 1980, 62, 87, discusses the evolution of this type of head-dress.
  - 30 Brydall 1894–5, 368.
  - 31 Fraser 1885, vol 2, 622; *Scots Peerage*, vol 3, 137–8.
  - 32 At the time of writing, the effigy of Lady Beatrice had already been replaced in the recess, on lead sheeting.
- REFERENCES
- Duncan, A M M (ed) 1997 *John Barbour, The Bruce*. Edinburgh.
- Brydall, R 1894–5 ‘The Monumental Effigies of Scotland, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century’, *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 29 (1894–5), 329–410.
- Cameron, N 1998 ‘Classical Forms in Scottish Romanesque Sculpture: Douglas, Rutherglen and Airth’, in Fawcett, R (ed) *Medieval Art and Architecture in the Diocese of Glasgow*, 98–101. London (=Brit Archaeol Assoc Conference Transactions, 22).
- Complete Peerage* Cokayne, G E 1910–59 *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom*, 13 vols. London.
- Dalrymple, H D, MacGibbon, D & Ross, T 1899 ‘The Five Great Churches of Galloway: the convent and college of Lincluden, Kirkcudbrightshire’, *Archaeological and Historical Collections relating to Ayrshire*, 10, 99–167.
- Fawcett, R 1994 *The Architectural History of Scotland. Scottish architecture from the Accession of the Stewarts to the Reformation 1371–1560*. Edinburgh.
- Fawcett, R 2002 *Scottish Medieval Churches, architecture and furnishings*. Stroud.
- Fraser, W 1885 *The Douglas Book*, vols 1 & 2. Edinburgh.
- Harvey, J 1987 *English Mediaeval Architects, A Biographical Dictionary down to 1550*. Gloucester.
- Hastings, M 1955 *St Stephen’s Chapel and its Place in the Development of the Perpendicular Style in England*. Cambridge.
- Reid, D (ed) 1996 *David Hume of Godscroft’s The History of the House of Douglas*. Edinburgh (=Scottish Text Society).
- Irving, GV 1864 *The Upper Ward of Lanarkshire*, 3 vols. Glasgow.
- Kempe, B 1980 *English Church Monuments*. London.
- McDowall, W 1886 *Chronicles of Lincluden as an Abbey and as a College*. Edinburgh.
- MacGibbon, D & Ross, T 1896–7 *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, 3 vols. Edinburgh.
- Mackinlay, J M 1914 *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland*. Edinburgh.
- Newbattle Register: Registrar S Marie de Neubotle*. Innes, C 1849 (ed) (=Banatyne Club).
- Markus, M 1994 *Tomb Recesses in the Province of York, c 1250–1400: their social and architectural context*. PhD thesis, Univ Glasgow.
- Markus, M 2003 *St Bride’s Church, Douglas. Illustrated inventory of the ex-situ carved and moulded stones*, 2 vols. Unpubl report.
- Muir, C 2002 *St Brides Church, Douglas – Effigy and Stone Collection: advisory condition and environmental survey*. Unpubl report.
- Newton, S 1980 *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince, a study of the years 1340–1365*. Bury St Edmunds.
- Richardson, J S & Wood, M 1949 *Melrose Abbey*. Edinburgh.
- Salzman, L F 1920 ‘Some Notes of the Family of Alard’, *Sussex Archaeol Coll*, 61, 126–41.
- Scott, M 1987 ‘A Burgundian Visit to Scotland in 1449’, *Costume*, 21, 16–25.
- Scots Peerage: The Scottish Peerage*, 9 vols, Balfour Paul, J (ed) 1904–14. Edinburgh.