

6. TWO FRAGMENTS OF CARVED WOODWORK AT TRAQUAIR HOUSE, PEEBLES SHIRE

THE two fragments of oak woodwork now to be described are of considerable interest inasmuch as both appear to have formed part of bedsteads, an article of furniture of which few early Scottish examples survive.³

The first (*a*) (Pl. XXIII, 1) measures 4 ft. 3 in. in width and 3 ft. 11 in. in height, and comprises three enriched linenfold panels framed within carved side-posts, top and bottom rails, and muntins; the back is plain. The joints are of mortice-and-tenon construction, and mortices for associated longitudinal rails are visible in the lower portions of the side-posts. This fragment appears to be of homogeneous construction, and may have formed the head-board of an open-frame bedstead⁴ of about the third decade of the sixteenth century.

The second fragment (*b*) (Pl. XXIII, 2) measures 4 ft. 2 in. in width and 3 ft. 5 in. in height. It is of similar construction to (*a*), and formerly incorporated two panels, of which one alone now survives; this is fielded. The lower portions of the side-posts are turned and decorated, and their backs embody mortices for longitudinal rails. This fragment is not of homogeneous construction, for the side-posts do not match the top rail and muntin, while the bottom rail is again of different character. Plainly the piece as it exists today is a mere assemblage of parts, but it is noteworthy that the top rail and muntin are similar in character to the corresponding portions of (*a*); indeed the top rails of (*a*) and (*b*) are of the same width, namely 3 ft. 6 in. It seems possible, therefore, that the top rail and muntin originally formed part of the same bedstead as (*a*), and that the remaining portions are subsequent replacements, the side-posts being ascribable to the sixteenth century, and the bottom rail to a somewhat later period. The bridge-piece that now secures one end of the top rail to a side-post is evidently a crude repair of comparatively recent date.

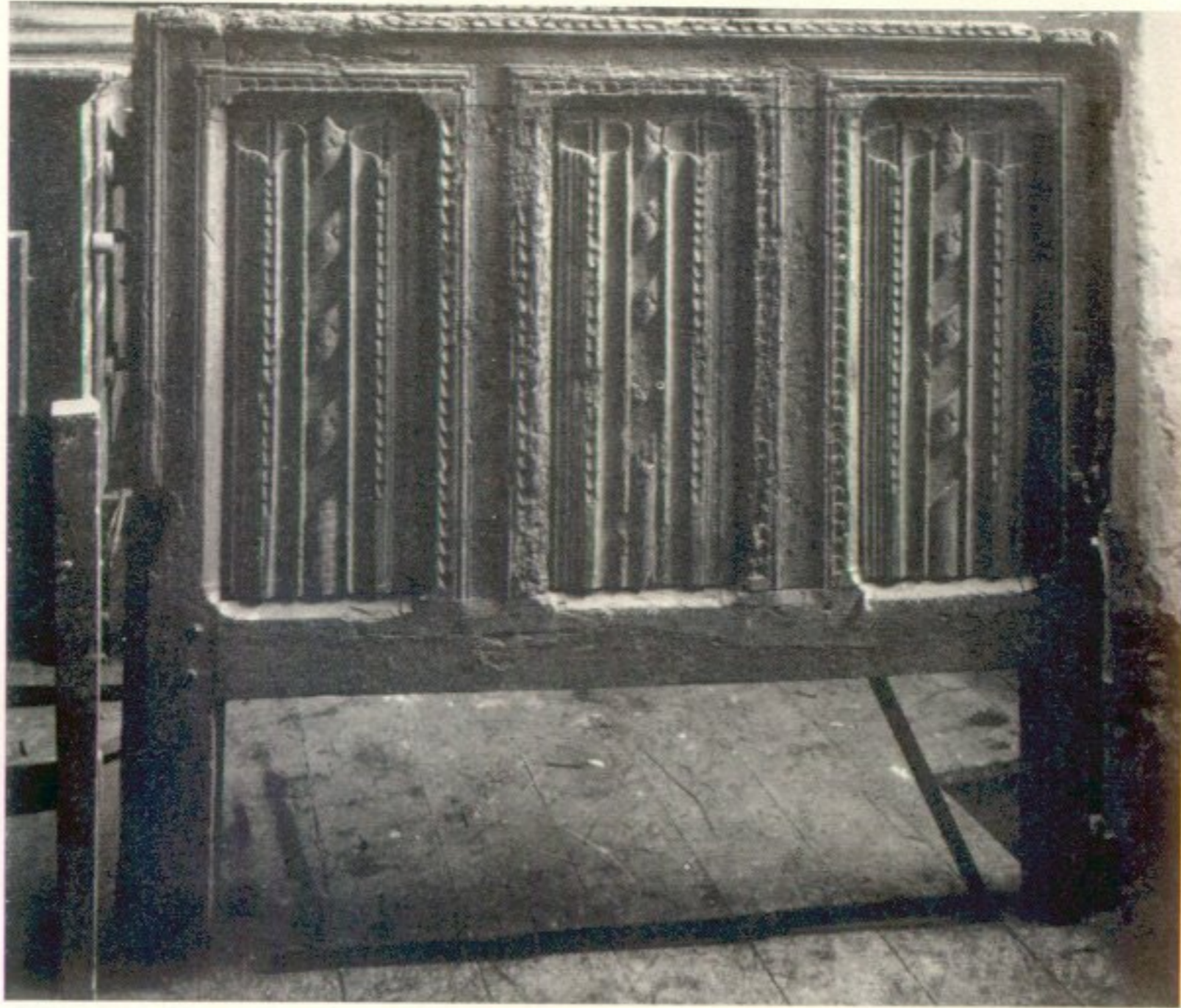
J. G. DUNBAR

¹ C.B.A., *Discovery and Excavation (Scotland)*, 1966, 46. My thanks are due to Mr John Cherry for commenting upon the significance of this fragment, which has now been deposited on loan in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland by the proprietor, Mr C. M. Oakes.

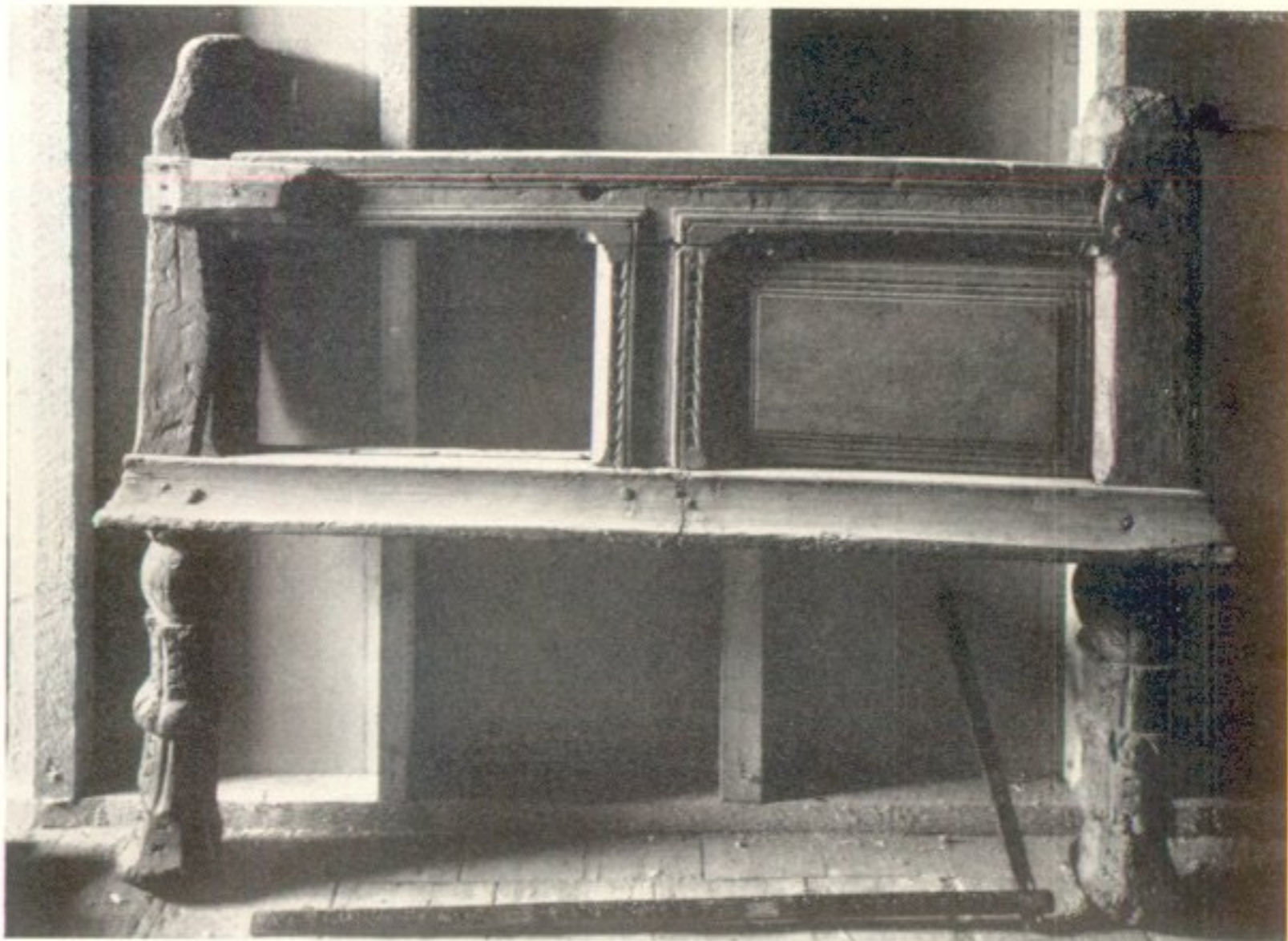
² cf. examples cited in Rutter, J. G., *Medieval Pottery in the Scarborough Museum, 13th & 14th Centuries* (1961), 26 f.

³ My thanks are due to Mr Stuart Maxwell and Mr Peter Thornton for commenting upon the significance of these fragments.

⁴ Cescinsky, H., and Gribble, E. R. *Early English Furniture and Woodwork* (1922), i, 366 and fig. 392.



Fragments of carved oak bedsteads at Traquair House, Peebleshire; *above* fragment (a), *below* fragment (b)



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DUNBAR: TRAQUAIR WOODWORK