

The Coat of Arms

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THE ARMS OF CISTERCIAN ABBEYS AS
DRAWN BY DOM ANSELM BAKER, Part 5:
CHESHIRE, HEREFORDSHIRE, LEICESTERSHIRE,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, STAFFORDSHIRE,
WARWICKSHIRE, WALES, AND MAN

MICHAEL CARTER, F.S.A., F.R.HIST.S.

Combermere Abbey, Cheshire: *Quarterly gules and or a bend sable and over all in sinister flank a crosier palewise gules.*

Originally a Savignac house, Combermere was founded in 1133 by Hugh Malbank, second baron of Wich Malbank. Together with all other Savignanc houses, in 1147 Combermere was absorbed into the Cistercian Order. The abbey settled a number of daughter houses. However, in common with so many other monasteries, its history was marked by occasional disorder, lapses from the Rule and debt. It was suppressed in 1538, at which time the community consisted of the abbot and thirteen monks.¹

The abbey's arms are those of the founder's family.² The earliest evidence for their use by Combermere is provided by a late-fourteenth-century heraldic roll.³ However, the crosier is shown as *Argent*, rather than the *Gules* given by Dom Baker. Very similar arms were again given to the abbey in William le Neve's book of c.1500, though this time without the bend and crosier.⁴ Shortly after, John Leland recorded the arms as *Quarterly gules and or a bend sable a crosier palewise argent*.⁵

Little now remains of the abbey's buildings, but there is no doubt that the use of heraldic ornament was widespread. The post-Dissolution house at Combermere retains portions of the monastic south range, including the refectory. Its hammer-beam roof is ornamented with the abbey's arms.⁶ Other evidence comes from the records of the famous dispute at the end of the fourteenth century between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor regarding the right to the arms *Azure a bend or*. The abbot of Combermere was summoned as a witness in support of the Grosvenor claim. He testified that these arms, which he recognised as those of Grosvenor, were painted on an altarpiece at his monastery.⁷

¹ *VCH Cheshire*, vol. 3, pp.150–156.

² DBA vol. 1, p. 337.

³ The County Roll of Richard II.

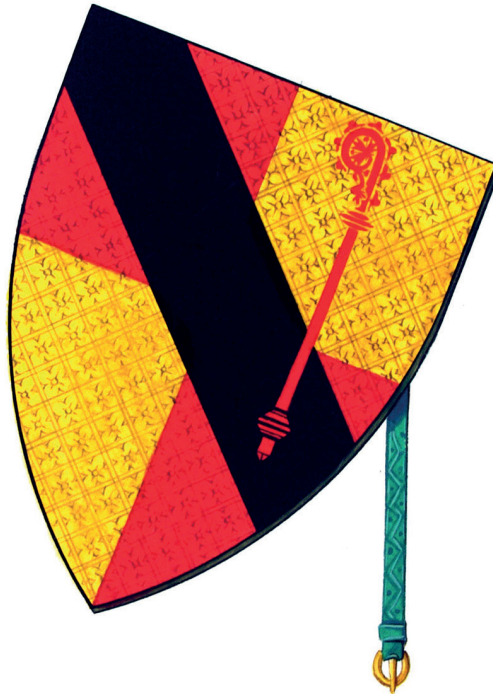
⁴ DBA vol 4, p. 313.

⁵ J.A. Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', in *At the Roots of Heraldry: collected papers of John Archibald Goodall*, ed. S. Ashley, Harleian Society, vol. 21 (2018), p. 93.

⁶ *VCH Cheshire*, vol. 3, pp. 150–56.

⁷ R. Stewart-Brown, 'The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, vol. 89 (1938), p. 18.

Combermere, Cheshire.



Founded by Hugh de Malbank Lord of Manton
wich, a. d. m. c. x. x. x. iii, dedicated to B. V. Mary and
S. Michael.

Figure 1: Combermere Abbey, Cheshire. All drawings by Dom Anselm Baker photographed by Paul A Fox and reproduced with the gracious permission of the Abbot and Community of Mount St Bernard's Abbey, Leicestershire.

CISTERCIAN ABBEYS

Vale Royal, Cheshire: *Gules three lions passant gardant or over all a crosier palewise sable in a border sable bezanty.*

The abbey's name and coat of arms are witness to its exalted founder, King Edward I (1272–1307). The monastery was founded in fulfillment of a vow made during a perilous sea crossing in the winter of 1263–64; the foundation charter was issued in 1270. Had Edward's plans been fully realised, Vale Royal would have been the largest and grandest Cistercian house in England. However, by 1290, the king had lost interest in abbey, then only partially complete. Works recommenced in the mid-fourteenth century thanks to the patronage of Edward, the Black Prince (d. 1376). But, in 1360 the incomplete nave was blown down during a storm. Eventually, the community had to seek the permission of Richard II (1377–99) to reduce the 'height and width' of their church.⁸

The abbey had multiple heraldic identities, all derived from its royal patron. The earliest evidence is provided by Sir George Calveley's Book, which dates to c.1350–1450. This gives the blazon *Gules three lions passant guardant or over all a crosier palewise argent*. An early-sixteenth-century source gives a slightly different version: *Gules three lions passant guardant with a cross crosslet fitchy or between the forepaws over all a crosier palewise argent headed or*. At around this time, the abbey was using a seal ornamented with the arms of England. It is to the eighteenth-century antiquarian Thomas Tanner that we owe the arms attributed to the abbey by Dom Baker. It is difficult to account for Tanner's inclusion of the bezanty border of the earls of Cornwall.⁹

The use of heraldry to ornament the buildings of the abbey is hinted at by the testimony given by the abbot of Vale Royal in support of Sir Richard Grosvenor's claim to use the arms *Azure a bend or*. The abbot stated these arms, which he believed to be those of Grosvenor, adorned the walls of his church.¹⁰

Dore Abbey, Herefordshire: *Gules two bars gemel and in chief a lion passant guardant or.*

Dore abbey, or as it is more usually called Abbey Dore was founded in 1147 by the local lord Robert of Ewyas. He brought over a colony of monks from Morimond (Haute-Marne). Dore was the only English abbey to be founded from this 'elder daughter' of Cîteaux, and itself founded a series of daughter houses.¹¹

The founder was buried at Dore, so too his elder son, also called Robert (d.1147), and a younger son called William became a monk at the abbey. By marriage to Sybil, the granddaughter and only surviving heir of the founder, the patronage of the abbey and lordship of Ewyas passed to Robert de Tregoz.¹² The arms attributed to the monastery

⁸ *VCH Cheshire*, vol. 3, pp. 156–165.

⁹ Goodall, *op.cit.*, p. 132. An unfinished version of the arms (three lions without the crosier) is included in Sir William le Neve's Book, c. 1500; *see DBA* vol. 1, p. 288.

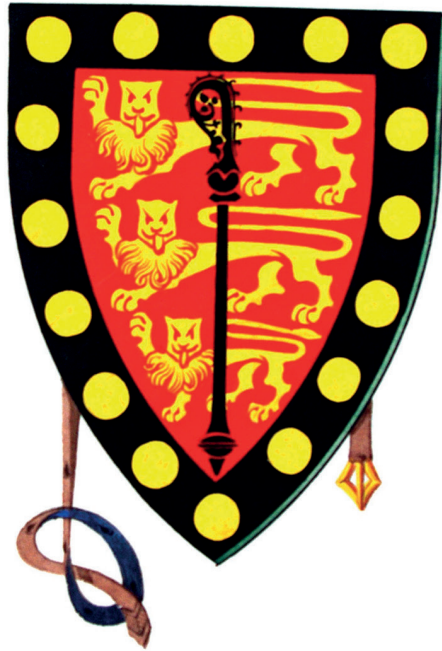
¹⁰ Stewart-Brown, 'The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy', p. 19.

¹¹ For a summary of the history of the house, see Robinson, ed., *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain* (London, 1998) pp. 101–2.

¹² The descent of the lordship is outlined in R. Richardson, 'People of the Abbey', in *A Definitive History of Dore Abbey*, ed. R. Shoesmith and R. Richardson (Almeley, 1997), pp. 94–95.

THE COAT OF ARMS

Vale Royal, or De Valle Regali; Cheshire. ^{vi.}*



Prince Edward, eldest son of Henry iii, began an Abbey on his manor of Dornhall, a. d. mcccvi. but when he became King, a. d. mcccxxvii. he built a stately Abbey at this place whither the Monks removed, a. d. mcccxxxi. *

Figure 2: Vale Royal, Cheshire.

Dore, Herefordshire.

xxiii.



Robert de Ervras youngest son to Harold
Lord of Ervras, built here tem Steph. an Abbey for
White Monks, to the honour of Blessed Mary.

Figure 3: Dore Abbey, Herefordshire.

THE COAT OF ARMS

by Dom Baker are those of Tregoz.¹³ Although it is entirely plausible that Dore used the arms of descendants of the founder,¹⁴ medieval evidence for the use of this or any other shield by the monastery is lacking.¹⁵

The abbey was suppressed in 1536, the east end of its church restored for Anglican worship in the seventeenth century.¹⁶ Preserved there are two ex situ thirteenth-century knightly effigies, possibly descendants of the founder. The elites were seeking burial within the abbey's church until well into the late Middle Ages, and large portions of the nave were given over to lay burials.¹⁷ Reset close to the high altar are numerous thirteenth-century floor tiles with various coats of arms. They can leave little doubt that Dore's church was replete with heraldic decoration.¹⁸

Garendon Abbey, Leicestershire: *Gules a cinquefoil ermine argent over all a crosier in bend or.*

Robert, Earl of Leicester settled a colony of monks from Waverley (Surrey) at Garendon in 1133, making the abbey one of the earliest Cistercian foundations in England. The site in the wild Charnwood Forest would have appealed to the Cistercians' desire to found their monasteries in inhospitable locations, 'far from the concourse of men'. Earl Robert was generous to his new foundations, and gifts from other benefactors ensured that by the end of the twelfth century it was the owner of estates in neighbouring counties. The early success of the community is shown by its foundation of daughter houses at Bordesley (Worcestershire) and Biddlesden (Buckinghamshire).¹⁹

Evidence from seals shows that the abbey was using heraldry from at least the mid-thirteenth century. The seal of Abbot Symon, datable to 1251, has a field decorated with estoiles and a fourteenth-century abbatial seal has a shield with *three estoiles*.²⁰ However, by the early-sixteenth century the abbey was using the arms illustrated by Dom Baker. These are attributed to Garendon in an early Tudor book of arms and confirmed by John Leland, the antiquary.²¹ They likely refer to the abbey's founder. The late John A. Goodall noted that the *cinquefoil ermine* was associated with the first earls of Leicester from as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century.²²

With an income of only £168, Garendon was dissolved in 1536 as one of the lesser monasteries. It was already partly ruinous, and nothing remains of its buildings above ground. However, the plan of the east end of the church and structures in the east

¹³ *DBA* vol. 1, p. 78.

¹⁴ For instance, Rievaulx, founded by Walter Espec, used the arms of his de Roos descendants, differenced by a crosier; see the earlier article in this series, *COA* no. 235 (2018), pp.122–24.

¹⁵ None of the abbey's known seals are ornamented with heraldry; see R.H. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office*, vol. 1: *monastic seals* (London, 1986), p. 1; *BM Seals* vol. 1, p. 535.

¹⁶ J. Tonkin, 'The Scudamore Restoration', in *Definitive History*, ed. Shoesmith and Richardson, pp. 173–76.

¹⁷ J. Hillaby, 'Cults Patrons and Sepulture', in *Definitive History*, ed. Shoesmith and Richardson, pp. 103–112.

¹⁸ A. Vice, 'The Medieval Floor Tiles', in *Definitive History*, ed. Shoesmith and Richardson, p. 80.

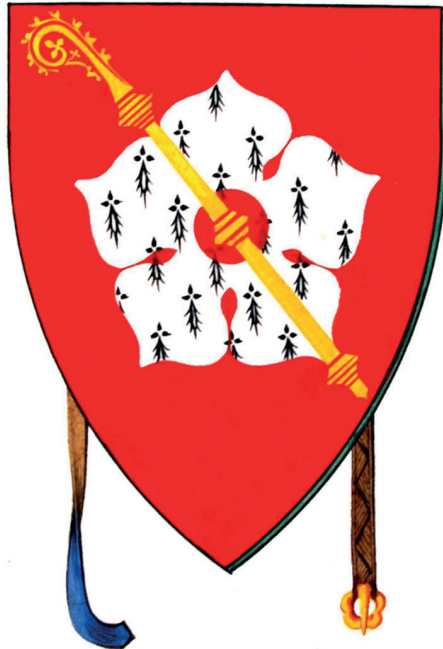
¹⁹ *VCH Leicestershire*, vol. 2, pp. 5–7.

²⁰ *BM Seals* vol. 1, p. 562; *DBA* vol. 3, pp. 288, 290.

²¹ CA L10 65v; J. Leland, *Collectanea*, vol. 1, ed. T. Hearne (London, 1744), p. 100.

²² Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', p. 101.

Gerondon, or Geraldon, Leicestershire. xxviii.



Robert Bossu, the good Earl of Leicester,
built here an Abbey for Cistercian monks
from Waverle, a.d. mcccxiij, under the
patronage of the B.V. Mary.

Figure 4: Garendon Abbey, Leicestershire.

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range, including the fourteenth-century chapter house with polygonal east end, have been uncovered by excavation.²³

Pipewell Abbey, Northamptonshire: *Argent three crescents gules impaling azure a crosier in pale or.*

A daughter house of Newminster (Northumberland), Pipewell was founded in 1143 by William Boutvillain (or Batevileyn, Boutvileyn). There were significant building works at the abbey in the early-fourteenth century, the chapter house being dedicated in 1312. King Henry VIII visited the monastery in 1509, marking the occasion with an offering of 6s 8d. The abbey's hospitality, charity and maintenance of the Divine Office were praised in 1536, but its inevitable suppression came in November 1538. The community then consisted of the abbot, thirteen monks and forty servants. The abbey was granted to Sir William Parre (d. 1547), and was rapidly looted by the local populace. By 1720, there were no standing remains.²⁴

The abbey's arms were those of founder's family.²⁵ These are impaled with a crosier, an obvious symbol of abbatial authority, and are documented in two early-sixteenth-century sources: an early Tudor book of arms, and also by John Leland, antiquary and librarian to Henry VIII.²⁶ Tantalising evidence of the presence of heraldic ornament at the monastery is hinted at by its Dissolution inventory which lists a '2 alter clothes of blake velvet, inbroderyd with lyons and crownes of goold' and and cope 'spottyd with lyons'.²⁷

Croxden Abbey, Staffordshire: *Or a bend between six martlets sable (sic).*

In 1176 Bertram de Verdun, lord of Alton, a baron of the Exchequer and a royal justice, settled a community of monks from Aunay-sur-Odon in Normandy at Cotton, near Alton. Within three years, monks moved a few miles south to Croxden.²⁸ The Verduns retained an intimate relationship with Croxden, its church becoming the family mausoleum. This tradition of burial was maintained until 7 June 1335 when Joan, the last of the Verduns, was interred amid great ceremony before the high altar.²⁹

The arms attributed to Croxden by Dom Baker are in fact those Croxton Abbey, a house of Premonstratensian canons in Leicestershire. They are the arms of the Luttrell family, recorded as those of Croxton by John Leland.³⁰

²³ Robinson ed., *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, pp. 119–20.

²⁴ For summaries and the abbey's history, see *VCH Northamptonshire*, vol. 2, pp. 116–121. What is known of the buildings is discussed in Robinson ed., *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, p. 137.

²⁵ For the arms of Boutvillain, see *DBA* vol. 3, p. 87.

²⁶ CA L10 66; Leland, *Collectanea*, vol. 1, ed. Hearne, p. 48.

²⁷ W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum: a new edition*, ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, vol. 5. (London, 1849), p. 440.

²⁸ *VCH Staffordshire*, vol. 3, pp. 226–230.

²⁹ J. Hall, 'Croxden Abbey Church: Architecture, Burial and Patronage', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 160 (2001), pp. 85–93.

³⁰ Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', p. 95.

Pipewell, olim **S.** Marice de **D**ivisis, **XXXVIII**
Northamptonshire. ✠



William de **B**ontevylein, founded this
Abbey in the year **MCXLIII**, and dedicated it
to the **B**lessed **V**irgin. ✠

Figure 5: Pipewell Abbey, Northamptonshire.

xlvi.

Ahotes, or **A**hotene, and **C**roxeden
or **C**roxden, **S**taffordshire.



Bertram de **A**erdun, a. d. mclxxvi,
gave a peice of ground at **A**hotes where
on to build a **M**onastery; which was af=
terwards removed to **C**roxeden.

Figure 6: Croxden Abbey, Staffordshire.

CISTERCIAN ABBEYS

However, there is sound evidence to suggest that Croxden was using the arms of its patronal family, the Verduns, which were *Or fretty gules*.³¹ Impressions of the abbey's seal survive from the fourteenth and early sixteenth century. Both are ornamented with a shield bearing the *fretty* arms of Verdun.³²

Croxden was dissolved in 1538. Impressive ruins of its church are now in the care of English Heritage. Excavation of the site uncovered a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century military effigy. This likely commemorated a member of the Verdun family.³³ If so the shield would have been emblazoned with their arms: this heraldry would have proclaimed the bond between patron and monastery, and served as a prompt for the monks to remember their founder and his descendants in their prayers and masses.

Dieulacres Abbey, Staffordshire: *Azure three garbs or over all a crosier palewise argent.*

A daughter house of Combermere (Cheshire), the abbey's origins go back to a monastery founded sometime between 1146 and 1153 by Robert the Butler at Poulton (Cheshire). However, in 1214, inspired by a vision, Ranulph de Blundeville, earl of Chester, moved the community to the site of a former hermitage on the banks of the Churnet, one mile north of Leek. When Ranulph told his wife Clemence of his vision and plans, she was said to have exclaimed 'Deux encrez' (God increases), giving the monastery its name. Ranulph died in 1232. His attachment to the monastery is shown by the burial of his heart there, and in 1253 his widow was also interred at the monastery.³⁴

Given the intimacy of the relationship between the patron and his monastery, it is no surprise that the abbey adopted the wheat-sheaf arms of Blundeville,³⁵ differenced by a crosier. They occur in a late-fourteenth-century heraldic roll (though without tinctures) and were seen by John Leland, in a window at the monastery.³⁶

The abbey was dissolved in 1538, at which time its community consisted of the abbot, Thomas Whitney, and twelve monks, who were supported by thirty servants and nineteen lay officials. The monastery was also providing sustenance to eight 'lauders' and bedewomen. Whitney died in 1558. He remained attached to his monastic vocation and former abbey until the very end, his will requesting burial at Westminster Abbey, recently refounded by the Catholic Mary I, and he left a silver-gilt chalice to his nephew on condition 'that if the monastery of Delencres be hereafter re-edified the said chalice to be restored to the said monastery'.³⁷ By 1612, the site of the former monastery had been occupied by farm buildings. There are now only the scantiest of in situ architectural remains.³⁸

³¹ *DBA* vol. 4, p. 100.

³² *BM Seals* vol. 1, p. 525; Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals*, pp. 28–29.

³³ Hall, 'Croxden Abbey', 113, 115.

³⁴ *VCH Staffordshire*, vol. 3, pp. 230–235.

³⁵ *DBA* vol. 4, p. 109.

³⁶ CA CY 74, 296; Leland, *Collectanea*, ed. Hearne, p. 52.

³⁷ *VCH Staffordshire*, vol. 3, pp. 230–235. For similar hopes for the revival of monastic communities during the reign of Mary I, see C. Cross, 'The Reconstitution of Northern Monastic Communities in the Reign of Mary Tudor', *Northern History*, 29 (1993), pp. 200–4 and M. Carter, 'Unanswered Prayers: A Cistercian Missal at York Minster Library', *Antiquaries Journal*, 95 (2015), pp. 267–7.

³⁸ Robinson ed., *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, p. 100.

xlvii.

Dieulacres, Staffordshire.



Founded by **R**ichard **B**lundevill the third, **E**arl of **C**hester, a.d. mcccxiiv; who translated the **M**onks from **P**ulton in **C**heeshire hither, and dedicated it to **S.** **M**ary and **S.** **B**enedict.

Figure 7: Dieulacres Abbey, Staffordshire.

CISTERCIAN ABBEYS

Combe Abbey, Warwickshire, two shields drawn: *Azure two lions passant guardant argent; Sable three combs argent on a chief or a mitre gules.*

Richard de Camville founded the abbey in 1150.³⁹ His descendants subsequently used the arms *Azure three lions passant argent*.⁴⁰ The abbey adopted a variant of these arms. The seal attached to the monastery's surrender deed of 1539 has a shield of arms with *three lions and a label of three points*.⁴¹ However, medieval evidence for the use of arms with two lions by either Camville or the abbey is lacking.

Nor is there any evidence of use by the abbey of the second shield attributed to it by Dom Baker. *Sable three combs argent* were the arms of the Tudor prelate Cuthbert Tunstall, bishop of London (1523–30) and later Durham (1530–52; 1556–59).⁴² These arms occur in a variety of media, including on floor tiles where they are surmounted by a mitre.⁴³ It is possible that Dom Baker mistakenly gave them to Combe in the not unreasonable belief that the combs canted on the monastery's name.⁴⁴

Merevale Abbey, Warwickshire: *Vairy or and gules.*

A daughter house of Bordesley (Worcestershire), Merevale was founded in 1148 by Robert, earl Ferrers. His descendants remained associated with the monastery for the next four hundred years. In 1253, William, earl Ferrers, was buried in its chapter house and in 1538 the recently suppressed monastery was granted to the then Lord Ferrers.⁴⁵ Evidence for the abbey's use of the arms of Ferrers in the Tudor period is provided by John Leland, who recorded them in a window at the monastery.⁴⁶

The abbey's gatehouse chapel survived as a parish church and retains portions of its medieval glazing.⁴⁷ This included heraldic glass, and now lost heraldic panels were documented by the Warwickshire antiquary Sir William Dugdale (1605–86). The latter included glass depicting two knights in heraldic surcoats and carrying shields charged with the arms of Ferrers. A second panel drawn by Dugdale is extant and shows a lady and a knight supporting a shield with the arms of Hardreshull. The style of the armour is mid-fourteenth century allowing identification of the figures as Sir John Hardeshull (d. c. 1365) and his wife Margaret.⁴⁸

A surviving fifteenth-century panel shows the arms of Ferrers quartered with those of de la Roche (*Gules three fishes naiant argent*). Edmund Ferrers of Chartley (d. 1435)

³⁹ *VCH Warwickshire*, vol. 2, pp. 73–75. For the abbey's surviving remains, see Robinson, op.cit., pp. 89–90.

⁴⁰ *DBA* vol. 1, p. 282.

⁴¹ Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals*, vol. 1, p. 26.

⁴² *DBA* vol. 3, p. 77.

⁴³ J.A. Goodall, 'English Medieval Armorial Tiles: An Ordinary', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 153 (2000), p. 113.

⁴⁴ For abbey's using canting coats, see Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', p. 141.

⁴⁵ *VCH Warwickshire* vol. 2, pp. 75–78.

⁴⁶ Leland, *Collectanea*, vol. 1, ed. Hearne, p. 51.

⁴⁷ In the mid-fourteenth century the chapel was the focus of pilgrimage; see J. Hall, 'English Cistercian Gatehouse Chapels', *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses*, 52 (2001), pp. 81–3.

⁴⁸ R. Marks, 'Cistercian Window Glass in England and Wales', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, ed. C. Norton and D. Park (Cambridge, 1986), p. 221.

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lii.

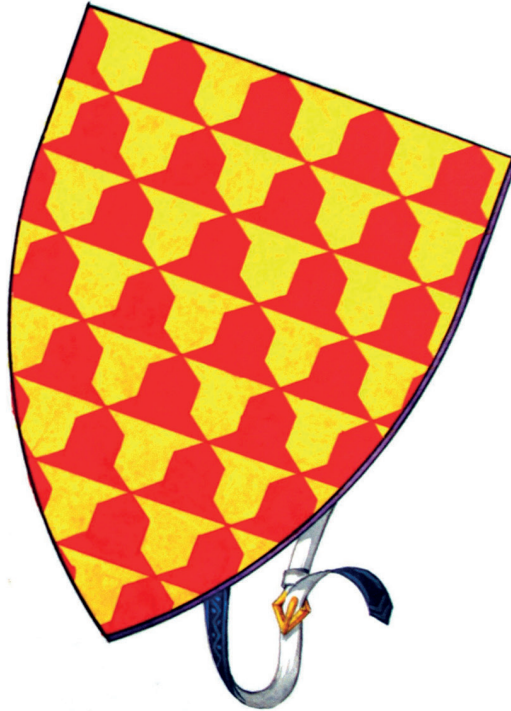
Combe, olim Smite, near Brinklow
Warwickshyre.



Founded by Richard de Camvilla a. d.
mcl, dedicated to the B. V. Mary.

Figure 8: Combe Abbey, Warwickshire.

līī.
Mereval, or De Miravalle, Warwick-
shire.



Robert iiii, earl of Ferrars and Not-
tingham, founded an Abbey here in honour
of Our Lady, a.d. mclviii.

Figure 9: Merevale Abbey, Warwickshire.

THE COAT OF ARMS

was married to Ellen de la Roche. In the same window are quarries with the horseshoe badge of Ferrers (the horseshoes cant on the family name). The arms of Ferrers and de la Roche are also depicted separately in glass of the same date.⁴⁹

The fifteenth-century glass also includes panels that suggest the monastery had multiple heraldic identities. A shield has the arms *Argent a sword or between a crescent and a pierced mullet*; the abbey's seal depicts the Virgin and Child between a crescent and a star or mullet. Accompanying this panel is a shield that bears the arms *Argent a crosier or over a bend checky*. These are close to the arms of Clairvaux (*Sable a bend checky gules and argent*), one of the greatest abbeys of the Cistercian Order, and St Bernard's own monastery. Furness Abbey (Lancashire) used a variation of these arms (*Sable a bend checky argent and azure*).⁵⁰ Evidence for the abbey's use of the arms of Ferrers is provided by John Leland, who recorded them in a window at the monastery.⁵¹

Dugdale's description of now lost glass shows that additions were made to the chapel's glazing scheme in the early-sixteenth century. This included a panel that showed the arms of the See of Bangor (*Gules a bend or guttee-de-poix between two pierced mullets argent*) impaling those of Thomas Skevington (*on a chevron between three doves and in chief three gilly flowers with three annulets*). Skevington's illustrious ecclesiastical career started as a monk of Merevale. He was educated at St Bernard's College, Oxford and in 1477 he was elected abbot of Waverley (Surrey). In 1509 he was appointed Abbot of Beaulieu (Hampshire). In the same year he became Bishop of Bangor, holding both the Welsh see and the abbacy of the Hampshire monastery until his death in 1533.⁵²

WALES

Valle Crucis Abbey, Denbighshire: *Gules a lion rampant Barry argent and sable between three cross crosslets fitchy or.*

The abbey of the 'valley of the cross' was founded in 1201 by Madog ap Gruffudd (d. 1236), the ruler of northern Powis. The Latin name of the monastery was derived from the nearby Pillar of Eliseg, a ninth-century memorial cross with an inscription recording the genealogy and deeds of the kings of Powis.⁵³

An early-sixteenth-century book of arms shows that the abbey was using the shield given above.⁵⁴ A variant of the arms is given in Welsh sources: *Barry argent and gules a lion rampant sable*. Sir William Dethick (c.1542–1612) gave the abbey's arms as *A lion Barry between cross crosslets argent*, whereas Thomas Tanner, the eighteenth-century prelate and antiquary, attributed to the abbey a shield consisting of *A lion with three bars*.⁵⁵ The lion is likely a reference to the founder's family. The great grandson of the

⁴⁹ Marks, *op.cit.* p. 222.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*; Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals*, vol. 1, p. 60.

⁵¹ Leland, *Collectanea*, vol. 1, ed. Hearne, p. 51.

⁵² Marks, *op.cit.*, p. 223; Glanmor Williams, 'Thomas Skevinton [Skeffinton; formerly Pace], d.1533', *New DNB*.

⁵³ Robinson ed., *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, pp. 194–97.

⁵⁴ CAL10 66.

⁵⁵ Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', p. 132.

De valle crucis ^{lxx.} Ulan-egwiste,



Founded by **M**adox ap **G**riffith **M**aylor,
prince of **P**owis, a. d. mcc, dedicated to the
B. V. Mary.

Figure 10: Valle Crucis Abbey, Denbighshire.

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founder (also called Madog ap Gruffudd) was buried before the high altar of the abbey church in 1306. His magnificent funerary slab survives and is incised with a shield with a *lion rampant*.⁵⁶ The abbey apparently had a second coat. A seal (1534) depicts a shield of arms *checky*.⁵⁷ There is no ready explanation for the use of these arms by Valle Crucis.

Basingwerk Abbey, Flintshire: *Argent on a cross engrailed vert five mullets or.*

Ranulf de Gernon, earl of Chester, founded the abbey for a community of Savignac monks in c.1131. Like all other Savignac houses, in 1147 it was absorbed into the Cistercian Order. Its border location ensured that it enjoyed the patronage of both English and Welsh potentates. The latter included Prince Dafydd ap Llywelyn (d. 1246) who in 1240 granted to the community the church at Holywell and the pilgrimage chapel and well-shrine of St Winifred there. The abbey was dissolved in late 1536 or early 1537, its choir stalls removed to the church of St Mary on the Hill, Chester.⁵⁸

The arms given above are documented in a heraldic source of c.1500 as the personal arms of one William de Basingwerk.⁵⁹ They were attributed to the abbey by Thomas Tanner, the eighteenth-century prelate and antiquary.⁶⁰ However, medieval evidence for the use this or any shield of arms by the abbey is elusive. None of the seal impressions surviving from the abbey are decorated with shields of arms. However, an impression dating to 1465 depicts an abbot kneeling in adoration of the Virgin and Child and carries the initials H W with a pastoral staff over the latter letter. This is plausibly the monogram of Henry de Wyrehall, abbot of Basingwerk between c.1430 and c.1465.⁶¹

Neath Abbey, Glamorgan: *Gules three clarions or.*

Originally a Savignac house, Neath was founded in 1130 by Richard de Granville, constable to Earl Robert of Gloucester. The monks rapidly prospered. In 1147, their abbey, with all the Savignac foundations, was accepted into the Cistercian Order. Neath's church was rebuilt between c.1280–1320. Its ornament was evidently rich. In December 1284, Edward I visited the abbey and presented the monks with 'a very beautiful baldachin', likely a canopy for the high altar.⁶² A magnificent tiled pavement was laid in the choir, the transepts and the entire eastern arm. The tiles date to c.1340 and have a strong heraldic element.⁶³ Included in their number are tiles with shields of

⁵⁶ D.M. Robinson, *The Cistercians in Wales: architecture and archaeology, 1130–1540* (London, 2006), pp. 288–89.

⁵⁷ Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals*, vol. 1, p. 92.

⁵⁸ Robinson, *The Cistercians in Wales*, pp. 225–30.

⁵⁹ *DBA* vol. 3, p. 223.

⁶⁰ T. Tanner, *Notitia Monastica* (London, 1744), CCXI.

⁶¹ *BM Seals* vol. 1, p. 437.

⁶² Robinson, *Cistercians in Wales*, pp. 261–67.

⁶³ J.M. Lewis, *The Medieval Floor Tiles of Wales* (Cardiff, 1999), pp. 240–45.

Basingwerk, in the parish of **Holywell**, **Flintshire**. **lxxi.**

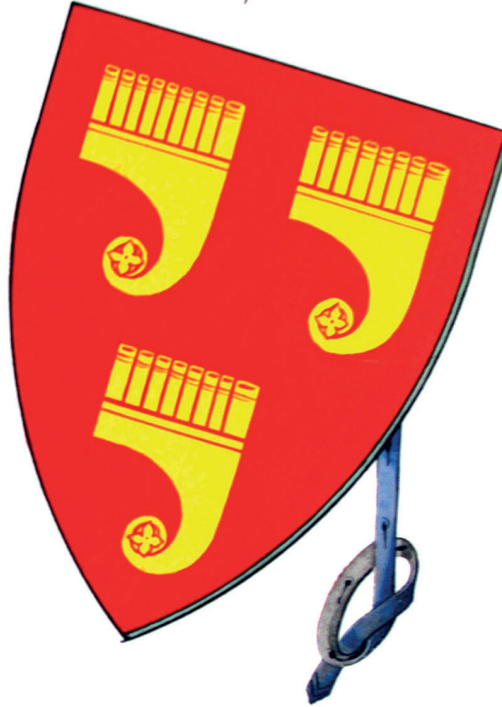


Ranbulf, **Earl of Chester** began a **Monastery** here a. d. **mcxxi**, which was improved & made into an **Abbey** for **Cistercian Monks** by **Henry ii**, about the year **mcclix**, dedicated to **S. Mary**.

Figure 11: Basingwerk Abbey, Flintshire.

Neith, Glamorganshire.

lxxiii.



Richard de Grainville & Constance his wife, gave their chapel in the castle of Neith, the tithes belonging to it, a large tract of waste land, & other possessions, ten **ten** i. to the Abbot of Savigny near Lions in France, that an Abbey might be built here. An Abbey was built, & colonised with monks from Savigny { who afterwards became Cistercians, } & dedicated to the most Holy Trinity.

Figure 12: Neath Abbey, Glamorgan.

CISTERCIAN ABBEYS

arms bearing *Three clarions*. These arms also occur on the abbey's seal.⁶⁴ They can be identified as the arms of Grenville, the abbey's founding family.⁶⁵

Building work continued at Neath well into the sixteenth century and the monastery was praised by Leland as 'the fairest abbey of all Wales'. It was dissolved in 1539. Parts of monastic buildings were incorporated into a Tudor mansion. However, this had been abandoned by the eighteenth century.⁶⁶

Rushen Abbey, Isle of Man: *Argent a cross sable fretty or.*

The abbey's arms are documented in an early Tudor book of arms.⁶⁷ They defy a ready explanation. However, the late John Goodall speculated that they could be connected to the founder, Olaf, King of Man.⁶⁸ He founded the abbey in 1134 as a daughter house of Furness (Lancashire). Rushen became the sepulchre of the kings and bishops of Man. It maintained a bond with its motherhouse throughout the Middle Ages, and there are affinities between the architectural development of the two monasteries. These include the building of a sumptuous abbatial residence in the late fourteenth century, and also the erection of a bell tower. At Rushen it was above the north transept where the Kings of Man lay in their tombs.⁶⁹

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This concludes the series of drawings by Dom Anselm Baker which were his attempt to create an armorial of the Cistercian abbeys of England and Wales, and began with issue number 235 (2018).

⁶⁴ Goodall, 'English Medieval Armorial Tiles', p. 122; Ellis, *Seals*, vol. 1, p. 63.

⁶⁵ *DBA* vol. 3, p. 265; Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', pp. 77–78.

⁶⁶ Robinson ed., *Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, pp. 149–51.

⁶⁷ CA L10 65v.

⁶⁸ Goodall, 'Arms of Religious Corporations', p. 123.

⁶⁹ G. Coppack, 'The Planning of Cistercian Monasteries in the Later Middle Ages: the Evidence from Fountains, Rievaulx, Sawley and Rushen', in *The Religious Orders in Pre-Reformation England*, ed. J.G. Clark (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 207–09.

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lxvi.
Rushin, or Ryshen, otherwise Bally
salley Isle of Man.



A religious foundation was began here
a.d. mxcviii by Mac Manis governour of the
Isle; but Olave King of Man, having given
some possessions here to the Abbey of Furnes,
Ivo, Abbot of that House built a Monastery here
a.d. mccciv, to the honour of the Blessed Yvgen.
LH

Figure 13: Rushen Abbey, Isle of Man.