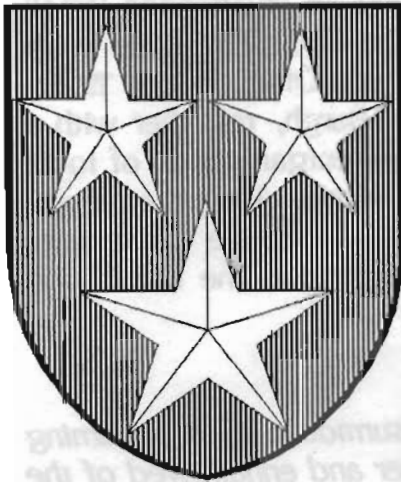


Notes on the
Heraldic Decorations
 for the 750th Anniversary of Dornoch Cathedral

by
 Dr Patrick Barden

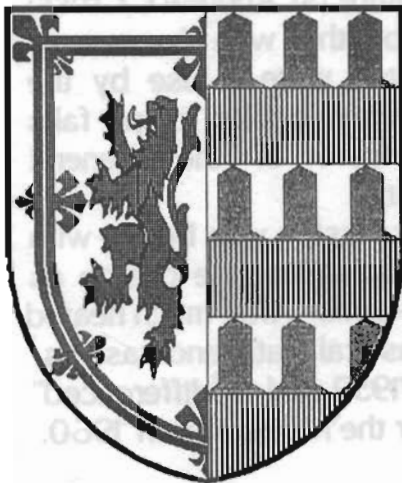


Gules three mullets Or.

The Earldom of Sutherland is one of the original earldoms of Scotland which had almost the status of small kingdoms, subject to the *Ard Righ* or High King.

The arms appear on old seals of the 13th and 14th centuries but are now borne with a royal augmentation, the double tressure flory-counter-flory, taken from the Royal Arms of Scotland.

The three mullets, but white on blue, are also borne by the related family of Moray (Murray) of which the founder of Dornoch Cathedral, St Gilbert (de Moravia) was a member.

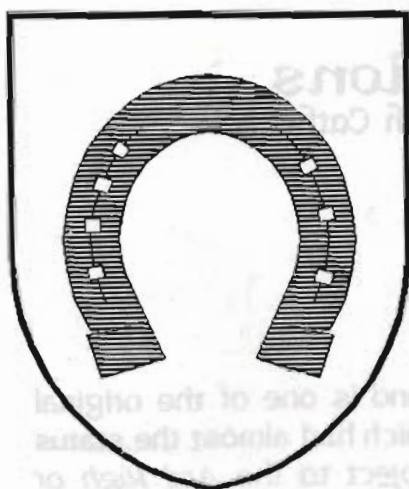


Two coats impaled: dexter, Or a lion rampant within a double tressure flory-counter-flory Gules; sinister, barry of six Vair and Gules.

King Alexander II succeeded his father, William I ("the Lion") in 1214 and married first the Princess Joan of England, daughter of King John. She died in 1238, leaving Alexander without an heir. The following year, 1239, he married Marie, the daughter of the Baron de Coucy. We are thus celebrating not only the consecration of Dornoch Cathedral, built under the King's charter, but also the 750th anniversary of his marriage.

Although it is very possible that William the Lion used the Lion Rampant, the earliest example of the Royal Arms of Scotland which exists today is that found on the seal of Alexander II.

The blue-and-white design in the de Coucy arms, known as "vair", represents the furry skins of squirrels sewn together. Coucy-le-Château-Auffrique is near Laon, in the present day *département* of Aisne in northern France. Its feudal castle was destroyed by the Germans in 1917.



Argent a horseshoe Azure having seven horsenails Or.

Domoch was the cathedral town of the diocese of Caithness and was originally a Burgh of the Bishop. It was created a Royal Burgh by King Charles I in 1628, with some reservation of rights to the Earl of Sutherland.

For many years, the Burgh seal showed a horseshoe, sometimes including an escutcheon (small shield) of the arms of the Earl. The arms were properly recorded at the Lyon Office in June 1929, in the name of the Royal Burgh, together with a crest and motto. After the reorganisation of local government in Scotland in the 1970s the Royal Burgh was no longer a recognised body corporate, its legal "heirs and successors" being the Community Council, which was one of the first in Scotland to petition the Lord Lyon King-of-Arms for a grant of the arms of the former burgh.



Azure a saltire Argent surmounted of a burning bush Vert enflamed proper and enhalloved of the divine effulgence Or its stem proper and issuing from a mount in base Vert.

The symbols of the saltire (St Andrew's Cross) and the burning bush, together with the motto: *Nec Tamen Consumebatur*, were in use by the Church of Scotland, on hymn-books, pulpit falls and even official literature of the General Assembly, for many years.

In the late 1950s, a discussion was begun with the Lyon Office about regularising the design as an ecclesiastical coat-of-arms. After much heated argument about the use of such things as ecclesiastical hats and tassels, these arms were granted to the General Assembly in 1959 and a "differenced" version, with a black "chief enarched" was granted for the Moderator in 1960.

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