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SOME NOTES ON THE SAVOYARDS IN NORTH WALES,
1277-1300, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SAVOYARD
ELEMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF HARLECH CASTLE¹

by A. J. TAYLOR



THE part played by Savoyards in King Edward I's campaigns in Wales, and more especially in the programme of castle-building to which those campaigns gave rise, has been referred to in a series of earlier articles and monographs published in England between 1950 and 1961.² The purpose of the present notes is to bring together a number of points of special interest to students of Savoy history, and in particular to draw attention to the ways in which the castle of Harlech, both in its surviving documentation and in its structure, bears witness to direct Savoyard influence. In so doing it is at once a privilege to pay tribute to a scholar whose

¹ The writing of this paper would not have been possible without much help, willingly afforded over the years to a visiting stranger, by many friends in Savoy. Besides my special debt to M. Blondel himself, I would like to acknowledge also the great assistance given me by Dr. Augusta Lange at Turin, and the ready help of M. Robert Avezou at Grenoble and of MM. Jean Sablou and A. Perret at Chambéry; the many kindnesses of Mme. la Baronne de Blonay at Grandson, M. et Mme. Hugues Jéquier at La Lance, and Dr. Joseph Saunier at Heyrieux and Saint-Georges; the innumerable and invaluable services and kindnesses of my friend and fellow-student of Anglo-Savoyard relationships, M. Jean-Pierre Chapuisat; the sensitive pencil of another friend, my colleague Leonard Monroe, for the drawings reproduced on pp. 311 and 315; the generosity of the Leverhulme Trustees, who assisted my researches in 1951-2; and, last but not least, the never failing help of the officers and staff of the Public Record Office in London. Figures 1 and 2 are reproduced by kind permission of that Office; Plates I, 8; II, 6, 7; III, 2, 4, 5 and IV, 4 by permission of H. M. Ministry of Public Building and Works.

The following abbreviations are used in citing manuscript sources: "T" = Turin, Archivio di Stato; "C" = Chambéry, Archives de la Savoie; "D" = Dijon, Archives de la Côte d'Or; "L" = London, Public Record Office.

² "Master James of St. George", in *English Historical Review*, t. LXV, 1950, pp. 433-57; "The Date of Caernarvon Castle", in *Antiquity*, t. XXVI, 1952, pp. 25-34; "A letter from Lewis of Savoy to Edward I", in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, t. LXVIII, 1953, pp. 56-62; "The Castle of St. Georges-d'Espérance", in *Antiquaries Journal*, t. XXXIII, 1953, pp. 33-47; "The building of Flint: a postscript", in *Flintshire Hist. Soc. Transactions*, t. XVII, 1957, pp. 34-41; "Castle-building in Wales in the later thirteenth century: the prelude to construction", in *Studies in Building History*, ed. E. M. Jope, 1961, pp. 104-133; official handbooks to Rhuddlan Castle (1949), Caernarvon Castle (1953) and Conway Castle and Town Walls (1956).

remarkable studies of the military architecture of the counts of Savoy have contributed so signally to the story of the castle works from which that influence was sprung, and a pleasure to render thanks to one who so generously gave help and encouragement to the writer in pursuing his own researches in the archives and castles of Savoy.

1. INTRODUCTORY

In the summer of the year 1277 King Edward the First of England, who through his mother Eleanor of Provence had inherited the closest ties of blood and friendship with the reigning house of Savoy, was at war with Llywelyn, Prince of Wales. The English records of the time preserve references to several Savoyard nobles and knights actively engaged in the campaign, prominent amongst them being Count Philip's nephew and future successor Amadeus³; Sir Otto de Grandson, long the king's most trusted companion and confidential servant⁴; Otto's kinsman Sir John de Bonvillars⁵; Sir William de Cicon⁶; Sir Arnold de Montagny (*de Monteniac*);

³ For references from English archives to Amadeus's service with Edward I between 1277 and 1282, see *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, t. LXVIII, pp. 56-62.

⁴ The best short account of Sir Otto de Grandson's many-sided career remains that by C. L. KINGSFORD in *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 3rd series, III, 1909, pp. 124-195.

⁵ Is first named on 3 April 1277 as bearer of letter from King Edward to Otto de Grandson, then engaged in besieging the Welsh castle of Dolforwyn (*Calendar of Ancient Correspondence concerning Wales*, p. 31); was at Chester in Sept. 1277; probably accompanied Otto to Gascony, 1278; revisited Savoy, and was at Evian on 22 March 1279 ("T", Baronnies de Vaud, 27, Mézières, 1); presumably in Wales with Otto in 1282 when latter was commanding royal forces based on Montgomery ("L", E 101/4/1, m. 1); in 1283 was sent to Wales "ad supervidendum castra domini Regis ibidem" (E 101/351/2); in 1284 named as Sir Otto's "knight-companion" — "commiliti domini Ottonis de Grandisono" (E 101/4/8); acted as Otto's deputy as justiciar of N. Wales, 1284-7 (E 159/65 and 73); appointed constable of Harlech Castle, Oct. 1285; died between July and November 1287, possibly one of several knights killed in action at siege of Dryslwyn, S. Wales. His wife Agnes, much favoured by Edward I (cf. gift of silver-gilt cup and cover, 18 Feb. 1286, E 101/352/4), very probably a sister of Otto de Grandson. One of John's brothers was Henry de Bonvillars, a Cluniac monk of Payerne, who became prior of Bermondsey (Surrey), and Wenlock (Shropshire) from 1285 to 1321; probably Otto de Bonvillars, named as justice of the Channel Islands under Otto de Grandson in 1278, was another; possibly they were the sons of Sir Henry de Bonvillars, named as castellan of Rue in 1258 (M. CHIAUDANO, *La Finanza Sabauda*, t. I, p. 16), mentioned in the account of Châtel-Argent in 1267-8 (*Ibid.*, pp. 124, 130, 131) and named as joining Count Philip at Aosta in Oct. 1271 (*ibid.*, ii, pp. 131, 135). There was also a Sir Edmund de Bonvillars, possibly John's heir, who accompanied Otto de Grandson on a mission to Rome on Edward's behalf in 1289 but who died while crossing the Alps ("L", C 47, 4/5, p. 7). In a letter of 1292 or 1293 Otto speaks of Sir John's brother Henry de Bonvillars as he would if he were his own brother or brother-in-law, "*mon frere le prior de Wenloc*" ("L", SC 1, XXVI, 34).

⁶ From Cicon, km. 24 north of Pontarlier. Is first mentioned 13 Nov. 1276, when he comes to England as the bearer of a message to Edward from Otto de Grandson ("...Willelmi Cykun nuper venientis ad nos in nuncium a partibus transmarinis ad partes Angl' ex parte Ottonis supradicti...", "L", C 62/52); with army in S. Wales, 1277; constable of Rhuddlan Castle, c. 1278-84; constable of Conway Castle 1286-1310/11, when he died; his brother Sir Stephen de Rognon was knighted by Edward in Wales in 1284 ("Domino Stephano de Rouenyhoun germano domini Willelmi Sicoun redeunti versus patriam de dono Regis, vj.li.xiiij.s.iiijd., quem Rex fecit militem" — C 47/3/21, No. 11).

and Sir Gerard de St. Laurent (?=St.Laurent-du-Jura).⁷ The war resulted in the reconquest by the English of territories that they had lost to Llywelyn some ten years earlier, and to ensure their future safe-keeping King Edward inaugurated, between May and August 1277, the building of no less than five major new castles. Three of these, Flint, Rhuddlan and Ruthin, lay in the north, to the west of Chester; the other two, Builth and Aberystwyth, occupied important positions in Central Wales and on the western sea-coast respectively.

From at least as early as March 1278 the architect principally in charge of this great project of castle-building was a certain Master James, who in the English records is sometimes styled “the Engineer” (*Ingeniator*), sometimes “the Mason” (*Cementarius, le Mazun*), and, most commonly of all, “Master James of St. George” (*de Sancto Georgio*). Evidence has already been published elsewhere⁸ for believing this Master James to have been none other than the young *magister Jacobus cementarius* who in 1261 had commenced the building of Yverdon in association with his father, Master John the Mason and Count Peter’s “keeper of the works” Master Peter Mainier.⁹ As “Magister Jacobus lathomus” we find him in 1267-8 executing

⁷ Sir Gerard de St. Laurent was with Edward at Acre in 1271-2 and stood high in the king’s inner circle; after service in S. Wales became first constable of Flint Castle, c. 1277-81; died 1282, possibly in the Welsh attack on the castle. His origin is not known, but the fact that Savoyard or Burgundian knights were appointed as constables of no less than four of the other castles (William de Cicon at Rhuddlan and Conway, John de Bonvillars at Harlech, Otto de Grandson at Caernarvon) makes it not unlikely that he was from Savoy also. Hugh de Grandmont’s Chillon accounts of 1265-6 record a payment of 15 lib. Laus’ to a Sir William de St. Laurent (“T”, Inv. Sav., 69, Fo. 5, Mazzo 1, No. 3 (c)).

⁸ *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, t. LXV, pp. 452-57.

⁹ A. NAEF, *Chillon: la Camera Domini*, 1908, p. 33, and most subsequent writers (e. g. Victor VAN BERCHEM, *La ville neuve d’Yverdon*, 1913, p. 220; Louis BLONDEL, *L’architecture militaire, Genava*, 1935, pp. 288-89, *Le château de Brignon, Vallesia*, 1949, p. 30, *Les châteaux et le bourg de Conthey, ibid.*, 1954, p. 155; Roger DÉGLON, *Yverdon au moyen âge*, 1949, p. 25), have hailed Mainier as “le véritable architecte et ingénieur militaire de Pierre I”, “le maître-d’œuvre général du comte”, etc. The present writer, fully aware of exposing himself to a charge of heresy, feels obliged to challenge this long-accepted interpretation of Mainier’s status and functions, with its ascription, explicit or implied, of the chief architectural authorship of all Peter of Savoy’s military works. He does so, (a) on the negative ground that, in his view, there is no real documentary evidence in the various relevant accounts to support it, and (b) on the positive ground that precisely analogous and near-contemporary accounts for royal building works in England make it almost certain that Mainier’s duties, far from being of an architectural and constructional character, were on the contrary wholly administrative and financial. In regard to (a), the accounts name him explicitly as “clericus domini” (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 11) and “custos operum domini” (*ibid.*, pp. 58, 63), but *never* as “magister operum domini” (i. e. maître-d’œuvre). There is no reason to suppose that when the title of “magister” is applied to him in 1261-2 (*ibid.*, p. 63) it is used differently from the sense in which it is applied to other senior household clerks, such for example as Master Arnold. When it is stated (*ibid.*, p. 25) that the castellan of Conthey and Saillon paid 30 pounds for the work of building the new donjon of Conthey “per consilium Petri Manerii”, this need mean no more than that Mainier assigned the “task” (presumably to *Franciscus cementarius*), negotiated the price and the conditions, and authorised the payment. With regard to (b), an exact analogy to the position and functions of Mainier in the works service of Count Peter is provided by that of Giles of Oudenarde, king’s clerk, in that of King Edward I: the accounts for Edward’s works at the Tower of London between 1275 and 1285 were presented throughout by Giles in his capacity as “custos opera-

the works of the well at Salins, this time associated with Sir (*alias* Master) John de Masouz, the “deviser” of the tower of Saillon.¹⁰ Between 1271 and 1275 the surviving Savoy Household Rolls¹¹ bear witness to the presence of this Magister Jacobus lathomus, again very often accompanied by Sir John de Masouz, wherever building operations were being undertaken by Count Philip. The list is truly formidable: Montmélian, Monthey, Contamines (Gümmenen); the four new castles of the Viennois, St. Laurent-du-Pont¹², La Côte-St. André, Voiron and St. Georges-d’Espérance; Rue and Romont; Bourg-en-Bresse and Châtillon-en-Chalarnonne¹³; Châtel-Argent and Aosta. Of several of the works in progress at this time little now remains to be seen. But at Châtel-Argent the tower erected in 1274-5¹⁴ stands largely intact, a fine example of the *donjons circulaires* assigned by M. Blondel to Period III, as does also the great Tour à Boyer at Romont, an undocumented and therefore less exactly dated work of the same group.¹⁵ It seems highly probable that two visits which Master James is recorded to have made to the Valdigne prior to 9 August 1275¹⁶ will have been to do with supervising the construction of the Châtel-Argent tower, which appears to have been entrusted jointly to Master Guido lathomus¹⁷, Humbertetus de Bardo lathomus, and a certain Arnolinus. At St. Georges-d’Espérance there are still instructive, if fragmentary, remains of the castle built for Count Philip between c. 1270 and c. 1274, an undertaking with which it has been suggested Master James was in all probability closely connected and from which place he most likely took the name by which he was known in England; here, on 25 June 1273, the Count rendered homage to his great nephew, the as yet uncrowned King Edward, for the Alpine passes and towns which, by an

cionum domini Regis”; they were certified “by the view and testimony” of the master mason, Master Robert of Beverley, who alone of the two is styled “magister operacionum” and who in modern terms would be regarded as the architect. William de Perton, a senior wardrobe clerk who was “custos operacionum” for the castle works at Flint and Rhuddlan, occupied precisely the same position vis-à-vis the “magister operacionum”, Master James of St. George, who again would be regarded as the architect.

¹⁰ “C”, Inv., 51, Fo. 257, Mazzo 1, No. 1.

¹¹ “T”, Inv. Sav., 38, Fo. 46, Mazzo 1, Nos. 2-4.

¹² Detailed accounts for works at St. Laurent-du-Pont in 1274-5 are preserved at Chambéry, Inv., 32, Fo. 14, Mazzo 1, No. 66.

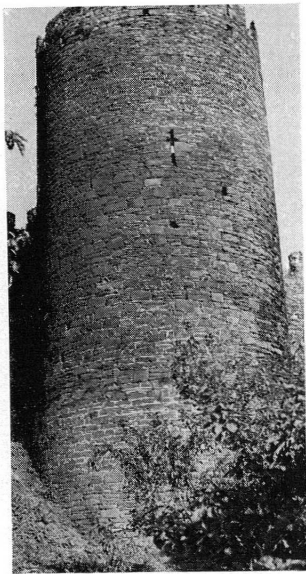
¹³ Detailed accounts for works at Bourg and Châtillon in 1274-5 are preserved at Dijon, roll B. 7079.

¹⁴ Detailed accounts for works at Châtel-Argent in 1274-5 are preserved at Turin, Inv. Sav., 68, Fo. 2, Mazzo 1, No. 2.

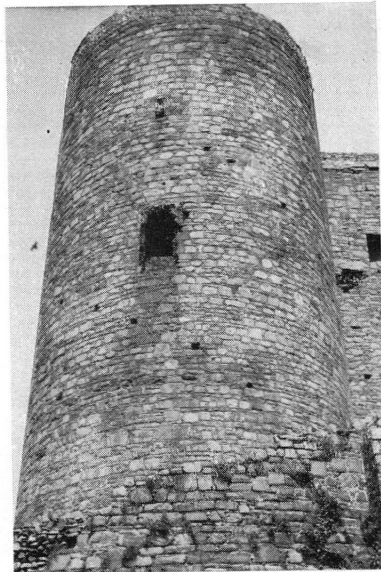
¹⁵ A possible date for the Tour à Boyer is indicated by an entry in the account of the castellan of St. Rambert for 1274-5: “Idem libravit Petro Uldrici carpentario et eius socio euntibus apud Rotundum Montem pro operibus domini, pro expensis ipsorum cum uno runcino qui portabat aysiammentum ipsorum... xxv.s.” (“D”, roll. B. 9738).

¹⁶ “T”, Inv. Sav., 38, Fo. 46, Mazzo 1, No. 4: “Magistro Jacobo lathomo misso in Vaudinii et Augustam, L. s. Item eidem quando fuit in Vaudinii per XXV dies quia non habuit nisi triginta solidos, xiv.s.” “Vaudinii” is wrongly transcribed as “Vaudum” in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, t. LXV, p. 455.

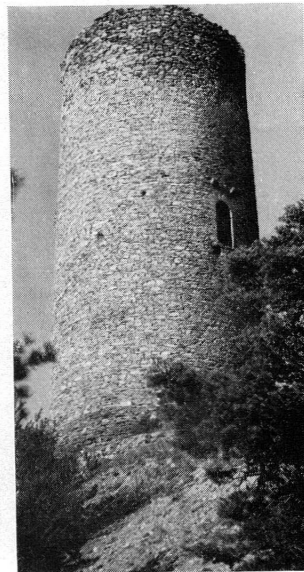
¹⁷ A well-authenticated master-mason, referred to also as “Guido lathomus de Voyrone”.



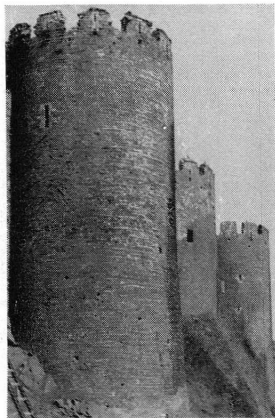
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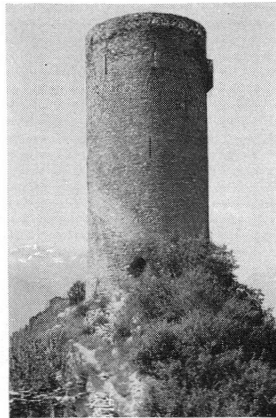
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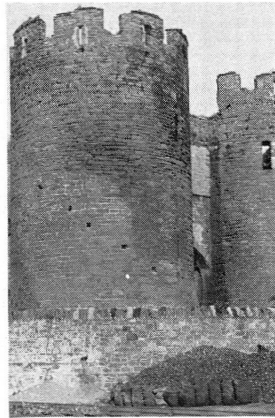
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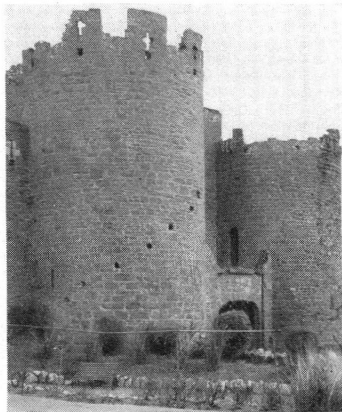
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Plate I. *Helicoidal scaffolding*. - 1. Conway Town Walls, Tower No. 15 (1283-4). - 2. Harlech Castle, S. W. Tower (c. 1289). - 3. Saxon (Valais), Donjon (1279-80). - 4. Conway Castle, Prison Tower (1283-6). - 5. Saillon (Valais), Donjon (1261-62). - 6. Conway Town Walls, Mill Gate, Round Tower of King's Wardrobe (1285-6). - 7. Conway Town Walls, Watch Tower (1283-4). - 8. Conway Town Walls, Upper Gate (1283-4).

arrangement dating from 1246, were held by the counts of Savoy of the kings of England.¹⁸

No record appears to have survived of the exact date when Master James left Savoy to take charge of the king's works in Wales. His first recorded wages begin to be paid on 25 March 1278; but it is not impossible that there may have been payments earlier than this of which the record is now lost, in which case he may already have been present during the summer of 1277 when the new works were in their earliest stages. What looks like being the last evidence for his presence in Savoy is contained in a single undated entry, in the account of the castellan of Bourg-en-Bresse and Châtillon for the year 1st March 1277–1st March 1278, recording the payment of costs incurred in sending "the mason" back from Bourg to St. Georges-d'Espérance, and also in sending his baggage:

*In expensis lathomi missi apud Sanctum Georgium et aysiamentis suis portandis, xxv.s.vj.d.*¹⁹

That this is a reference to Master James is almost certainly to be inferred from the simple, unqualified use of the term "lathomi"; a mason less well known, or of less consequence, would most likely either have been referred to by name, or else by the vaguer, less specific "cuiusdam" lathomi. And as the sending of the baggage shows that its owner was quitting Bourg for good²⁰, one is tempted to see in this laconic and undramatic entry of travelling expenses the record of the first stage of a journey which was to take Count Philip's leading mason to an assignment in which, as "Master James from St. Georges", he was to prove himself over the next twenty-five years as one of the greatest military architects of the Middle Ages.

2. MASTER JAMES AND THE NEW CASTLES IN WALES: PERIOD I, 1278-82

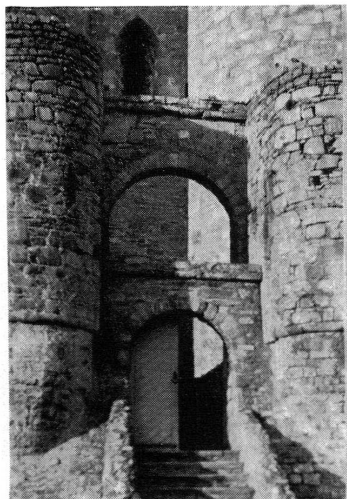
On 27 March 1278 Master James arrived at Down Ampney in Gloucestershire to spend a fortnight with the king and his entourage, who were then travelling from manor to manor in that part of England.²¹ He left the court again at Bruton

¹⁸ See Sir Maurice POWICKE, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward*, Oxford, 1947, i, p. 356; the towns and castles so held were Avigliana, Susa, Bard and St. Maurice-d'Agaune. By a similar arrangement of 1281 Count Otto of Burgundy acknowledged that he held the towns of Chalamont, Pontarlier and Jougne, and the Fort de Joux (*Castrum de Jou*), in fee and homage of King Edward (RYMER, *Foedera*, ii, p. 162).

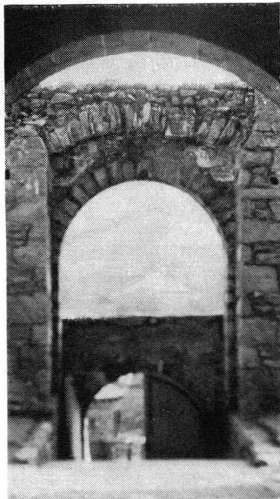
¹⁹ "D", roll B. 7080. It is significant that Master James the mason is mentioned repeatedly in the Bourg accounts of 1274-5 (B. 7079), but not once in those of 1278-97 (B. 7080-7084).

²⁰ Cf. the despatch of the two carpenters with their baggage to the works at Romont in 1274-5, above, p. 292, note 15.

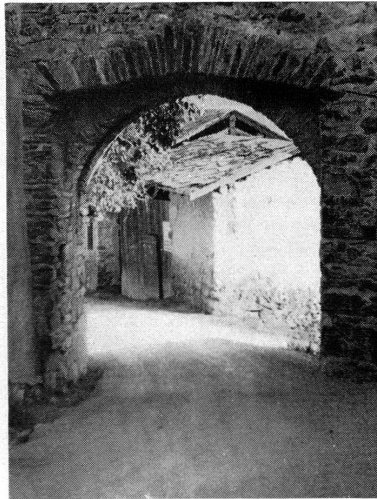
²¹ "Venit J. Cement' ad xij.d. per diem" ("L", C 47/3/49).



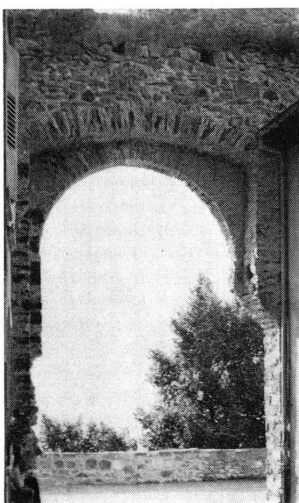
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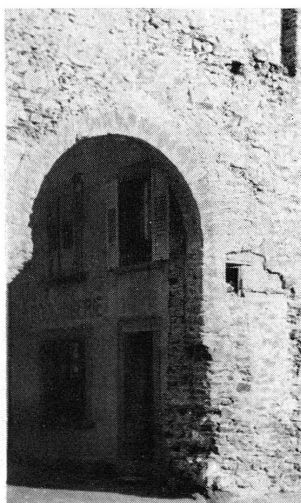
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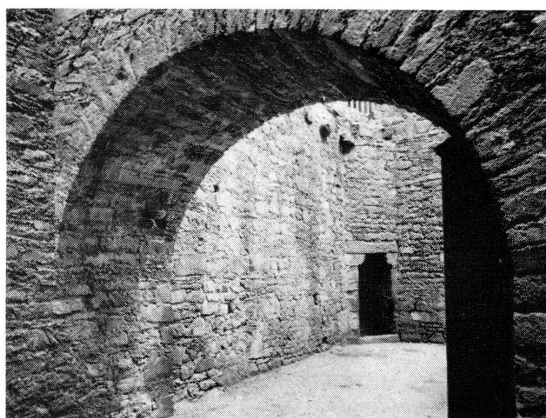
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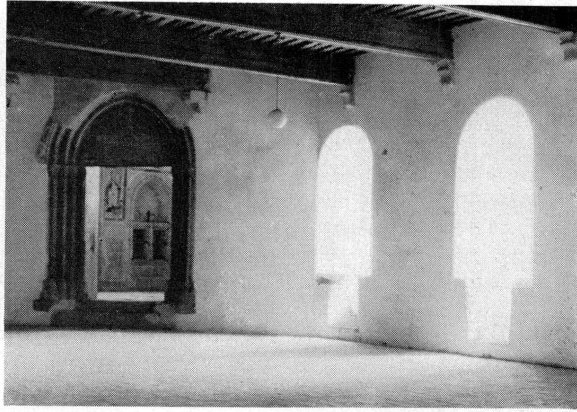


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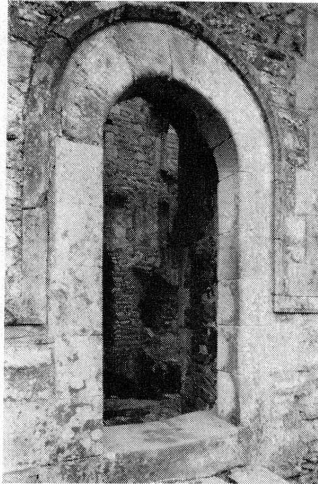


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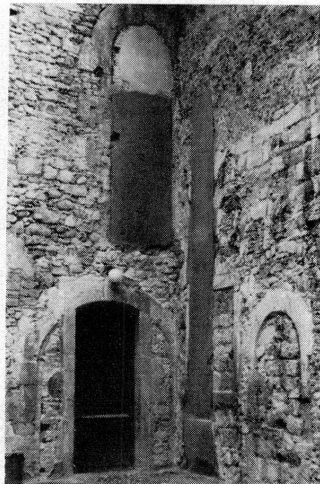
Plate II. *Use of full-centred arch.* – 1 and 2. Harlech Castle, outer gate, ext. and int. – 3. Saillon (Valais), Porte de Leytron, int. – 4 and 5. Saillon, Porte du Sex, int. and ext. – 6. Harlech, embrasures in S. E. Tower. – 7. Harlech, arch in gatehouse.



1



2



3



4



5

Plate III. *Use of full-centred arch (ctd.)*. - 1. Champvent (Vaud), embrasures on first floor of E. range. - 2. Harlech, doorway on first floor of gatehouse. - 3. Yverdon (Vaud), blocked first-floor doorway in N.E. corner of courtyard. - 4. Harlech, embrasure in N.E. Tower. - 5. Conway Castle, E. window of Great Hall.

in Somerset on 8 April ²², when the record says he was going to Wales “to direct the works of the king’s castles there”. For the next three years, until November 1280, his principal concern was with the building of Rhuddlan Castle and the canalising of the River Clwyd to give direct access to it from the sea, 4 km. away. Amongst the relatively few personal particulars of these works that have come down to us may be noted a number of payments made throughout the summer and autumn of 1278 to a certain Giotus de Vergers, as for example:

Windsor, 14 July 1278. *Guiloto de Vergers ducenti sex fossatores de Kenington usque Rothelan, ad suas expensas, xxvj.s.viiij.d.*

Clarendon, 21 July 1278. *Gioto de Vergers eunti apud Rothelan ad morandum ibidem super operarios Regis, pro vadiis et expensis suis ... xlv.s.*²³

If, as seems reasonable, we may identify the subject of these entries with the Guigo de Vercors ²⁴ whom we meet in the Savoy records earlier in the same decade, it will be evident that he and Master James were by no means new associates, as the following extracts show:

Chambéry, 23 August 1271. *Magistro Jacobo lathomo de mandato domini, xij.sol. Item in expensis eiusdem et Guigonis de Vercors quando fuerunt apud Montem Melianum, ij.sol.*²⁵

Voiron, 18 August 1275. *Item domino Guigoni de Vercors et Guidoni lathomissis ad Sanctum Georgium, xv.s.*²⁶

Nor do Master James and Guy de Vergers provide the only personal links between Rhuddlan and Savoy. We have already noted that in the Savoy records James’s name is frequently found joined with that of Sir John de Masoz, or Masot. Now it has been pointed out by M. Blondel ²⁷ that John de Masot makes his first recorded appearance as one of the *magistri ingeniatorum* engaged with Peter of Savoy at the siege of the castle of Bénauges in Gascony in 1253, being knighted for his services

²² “Vacavit Cement’” (*ibid.*). It is perhaps not without interest to note that Amadeus of Savoy was also at court during the second week of Master James’s stay. He arrived – *Venit A. de Sabaud’* – on 2nd April at Devizes, and left – *Vac’ A. de Sabaudia* – from Gillingham on 23rd April.

²³ British Museum, Add. MSS. 36762.

²⁴ A relative, no doubt, of the count’s clerk Simon de Vercers (cf. L. BLONDEL, *L’architecture militaire*, p. 289).

²⁵ CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, ii, p. 126.

²⁶ “T”, Inv. Sav., 38, Fo. 46, Mazzo 1, No. 4.

²⁷ *L’architecture militaire*, p. 290. But is his Gascon origin, from Mesoz in the Landes, quite certain? Admittedly in the Rôles Gascons his name occurs as “de Mesot”, “de Meysot” and “de Mesoz” as well as “de Maysoz”. But in the Savoy records the “e” form does not appear at all, the variants ranging between “Masot”, “Masout”, “Massout”, “Masoz” and “Masouz”, and one asks whether a derivation from Maisod (Jura), between Moirans and Orgelet, may not also be possible.

by Henry III of England in the following year. It is interesting to find that two others named with Masot at that time as being closely concerned with the military works in Gascony, namely Master Bertram²⁸ and a certain Peter le Burguynun, are associated with Master James at Rhuddlan in 1278. Thus in March Master Bertram is paid for acquiring two "houses", presumably works huts, for use in the castle²⁹, while in July "Petrus (*alias* "Perotus") le Burgillon" was paid for the same 45 days' stay in connection with the works as was Guy de Vergers.³⁰

By the autumn of 1280 the castle of Rhuddlan was substantially completed. The main building effort was now transferred to Flint, and from November onwards James of St. George's wages head the masons' roll for this castle. Insofar as the names of other masons working under him are preserved they are for the most part evidently of English origin, but a few, as for example William Senin³¹, Richard de Franckevill', John Pycard³² and William Seyssel³³, are of continental provenance and may have come with him from Savoy. For the building of the other three castles begun in 1277 we have less documentation, so that it is not even possible to say with certainty whether or not Master James had supervisory responsibility for them. We do know, however, that when a part of the work at Aberystwyth was found to be unsatisfactory the men in charge there asked that he should be sent for from Rhuddlan, so that he could say what should be done to put it right.³⁴ This certainly supports the view that he already had a general authority over all the works in Wales and not merely over those of Rhuddlan and Flint. Moreover in December 1280 he was granted "letters of protection" for a further seven years³⁵;

²⁸ The Gascon origin of Bertram is indeed probable, if, as is likely, he is the Master Bertrand de Saltu (Sault de Navailles, Basses-Pyrénées), *ingeniator*, who first appears in 1248 (*Close Rolls 1247-51*, p. 82); in charge of king's engines at the Tower of London in 1276; present at siege of Dolforwyn, Wales, April 1277; died at Caernarvon, 1284. In a letter to King Edward, written at Dolforwyn during the siege and dated 3 April 1277, Otto de Grandson said that when the castle surrendered it would need much repair, and expressed his fears that if he assigned the work to Master Bertram the latter would "devise too many things and perhaps waste the king's money, and therefore some other man would be needed who would take the matter in hand" (*Cal. Ancient Correspondence concerning Wales*, p. 31). This evidence of Otto de Grandson's lack of confidence in Master Bertram and his wish to employ someone else is of the greatest interest, seeing that it might point to one of the reasons that led to the bringing of Master James over from Savoy to take charge of the works in Wales.

²⁹ "Pro duabus domibus emptis apud Rothelan ad ponendum in castro Rothel' per manus Magistri Bertrami Ingeniatoris, xxvj.s.viii.d." (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS. 36762).

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Possibly from Senin, a hamlet near Parmilieu N. E. of Crémieu (Isère).

³² The name recalls those of James Picard, mason, associated with Giles and Tassin of St. George at Saxon in 1279-80 (*Vallesia*, t. X, 1955, p. 88) and Vincent Picard, mason, engaged on task-work at Yverdon in 1271 ("T", Inv. Sav., 70, Fo. 205, Mazzo 1, No. 2).

³³ Named also in the accounts for Conway and Harlech castles in 1286. Probably from Seyssel (Dépts. Ain and Haute-Savoie), described by L. BLONDEL, *Châteaux de l'ancien diocèse de Genève*, Genève, 1956, pp. 429-33. A certain "Perronetus de SAYSELLO" is named among builders working at the count's castle of Le Bourget in 1291-2 on task-works assigned by Master Theobald of St. George ("C", Inv., 50, Fo. 154, Mazzo 1, No. 1).

³⁴ "L", C 49/1/19.

³⁵ *Cal. Patent Rolls 1272-81*, p. 370.

this again implies a general responsibility, for by this time the works of Flint were probably within three or four years of completion.

3. THE NEW CASTLES IN WALES: PERIOD II, 1282-90

In March 1282 the Welsh rose in rebellion against King Edward, besieging and doing damage to the three castles of Flint, Rhuddlan and Aberystwyth. The siege of Rhuddlan was raised a month later by a relief expedition from Chester led by Amadeus, for whose return to Savoy, on account of the death of Thomas III on 14 May, their brother Lewis was shortly to petition the king.³⁶ At about this same time Master James of St. George was sent to Aberystwyth *ad castrum Regis ibidem construendum* – presumably, that is, to survey the recent damage and to arrange for the resumption of work. It is therefore of the greatest interest that we have a single chance surviving reference (Fig. 1) which shows that when, very shortly afterwards, the works were resumed, they were entrusted, from 7 June 1282³⁷, presumably by Master James’s own arrangement, to another Savoyard mason and

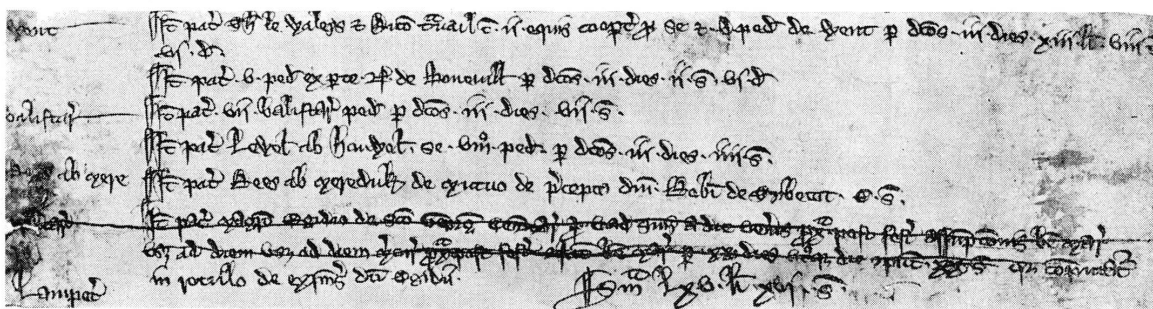


Fig. 1. Extract from roll of payments to the army in West Wales, 1282-3, showing wages of 1s. a day paid to Master Giles of St. George, mason, 21 Aug. to 9 Sept. 1282; the entry is cancelled because the payment is accounted for in Giles’s own roll of expenses, now no longer extant (London, P.R.O., C 47/2/4).

namesake of his, a certain Master Giles of St. George. We say ‘‘Savoyard’’ mason, because there can hardly be any reasonable doubt that this ‘‘Magister Egidius de Sancto Georgio cementarius’’ is one and the same individual as the ‘‘Giletus de Sancto Georgio lathomus’’ who, in association with his brother Tassin (named at Falavier in 1280 as Taxinus ‘‘de Sancto Georgio’’³⁸), had been responsible as recently as 1279-80 for the building of Count Philip’s new *donjon circulaire* at Saxon

³⁶ Details in *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, t. LXVIII, pp. 56-62.

³⁷ According to a note on the back of the roll here illustrated, wages were paid to Master Giles and his partner from this date.

³⁸ ‘‘C’’, Inv., 135, SA. 3769.

in the Valais.³⁹ The inference to be drawn from this would seem to be that, in the acute emergency arising from the sudden Welsh rebellion, with its assault on the king's new castles, Edward had immediately turned to Count Philip for help, and that Philip had at responded by despatching Master Giles to Wales to assist Master James. Perhaps this may have been the friendly act of Philip's to which Eleanor of Provence was referring when she wrote to Edward on 26 August 1282, ... *et pensez comme il vos fu ami en vostre grant besogne d'Angleterre...*⁴⁰ We shall meet "Giletus" again at Harlech.

Another craftsman who had probably also been previously employed in Savoy is found engaged in work at Rhuddlan in 1283. This was a certain Stephen, a painter. Again we have only a single reference, as follows:

*Stephano pictori, depingenti cameram Regis, et pro coloribus emptis per ipsum et pro stipendiis suis, xiiijs.*⁴¹

It seems difficult to doubt that this Stephen must be the same artist as had been engaged by Master James of St. George in 1274-5 to decorate the painted chambers of the count and countess in Count Philip's new castle of St. Laurent-du-Pont in the Viennois:

*Pro camera domini pingenda ad precium factum per Stephanum pictorem per manum Magistri Jacobi, lx.s. Pro camera domine pingenda per dictum Stephanum per manum predicti Magistri Jacobi, lx.s. Pro capella et garderoba domini pingenda ... factum per dictum Stephanum per manum ipsius Magistri Jacobi, l.s.*⁴²

And it was presumably also this same Stephen who, in the previous year (May-July 1273—exactly the time of the king's stay as Count Philip's guest at Saint-Georges), had carried out the redecoration of Westminster Hall in preparation for Edward's coronation, then expected to take place that year:

*Pro Stephano pictore Regis. Liberate de thesauro nostro Stephano pictori nostro xl.s. in partem solucionis vadiorum suorum circa dealbacionem et decorationem magne aule nostre Westmonasterii.*⁴³

It is of very considerable interest indeed to find the decoration of these widely separated buildings in the hands of the same expert, and one may be forgiven for wondering whether a painter who had worked at Westminster before he worked at

³⁹ L. BLONDEL, *Le château de Saxon, Vallesia*, t. IX, pp. 165-74; X, pp. 87-88.

⁴⁰ M. CHAMPOLLION-FIGEAC, *Lettres de Rois, Reines et autres personnages des Cours de France et d'Angleterre*, Paris, 1839, p. 307, cited by F. MUGNIER, *Les Savoyards en Angleterre au XIII^e siècle, Mém. de la Société savoisienne d'histoire et d'archéologie*, t. XXIX, p. 333.

⁴¹ *Archaeologia*, t. XVI, 1806, p. 44.

⁴² "C", Inv., 32, Fo. 14, Mazzo I, No. 66 (ii).

⁴³ "L", C 62/49, m. 4.

Rhuddlan may not by the same token have worked at Chillon before he worked at St. Laurent-du-Pont. Have we here, perhaps, a clue to the decorator of the *domus clericorum*? Stephen's title of "pictor Regis" suggests an English origin, and in this connection we may recall that Bartlet ("Berteletus"), the carpenter who was paid 40s. in 1266 *pro taschia domus clericorum*⁴⁴, was himself apparently an Englishman, being styled Berteletus "anglicus" when working at Yverdon in 1266-7.⁴⁵ That there may indeed have been an artistic connection between Peter of Savoy's work at Chillon and Henry III's contemporary work at Westminster is suggested by the use in St. Faith's Chapel in Westminster Abbey of the same characteristic red and white chevron motif.⁴⁶

The war of 1282-3, unlike that of 1277, was to lead to the conquest by Edward of territories long held by the native Welsh princes of Gwynedd, centred round the mountainous heart of Snowdonia. To control and administer this newly acquired province the king at once proceeded to establish three more castles of great strength at strategic points along the North Wales sea-board. These were Conway, begun in March 1283; Harlech, begun in May; and Caernarvon, begun in June. Caernarvon was planned on a lavish and magnificent scale as the castle destined to be the capital of the new English principality and the palace of its princes. Its array of polygonal towers were probably intended to recall, in their architectural treatment, the towers of the Theodosian walls of Constantinople, symbolic for Edward's reincarnation of Caernarvon as a centre of imperial power. Its first permanent castellan, Otto de Grandson, was also, from 1284, the first justiciar or viceroy of the new provincial administration, and it is believed that the famous Eagle Tower, the first of Caernarvon's apartments to be made ready for occupation, and so named from the triplet of imperial eagles that crowned its summit, was thus designed to serve as the official residence in Wales of the lord of Grandson in the Pays de Vaud. Owing to the destruction of its account rolls, we know much less about the earliest building of Caernarvon and the men engaged on it than we do about Conway and Harlech. What is certain, however, is that through the earliest period of construction of all three castles Master James of St. George was in receipt of wages from the king's wardrobe, that high privileges and rewards were granted both to him and to his wife Ambrosia⁴⁷, and that by the beginning of 1285 he is being referred to by the all-embracing title of "master of the king's works in Wales".

⁴⁴ A. NAEF, *Chillon: la camera domini*, p. V, note 22.

⁴⁵ CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 117.

⁴⁶ For the Chillon decorations, cf. NAEF, *op. cit.*, esp. pp. 42-48, Fig. 32, and Pls. VIII and IX (b); for the painting in St. Faith's Chapel at Westminster, see Pamela TUDOR-CRAIG in *Archaeological Journal*, t. CXIV, 1957, Pl. XXIIA.

⁴⁷ A name rarely found in English records; contemporary examples I have noted in Savoy include Ambrosia, wife of Peter Bonivardi, Burgess of Chambéry, c. 1275 ("C", Inv., 65, Fo. 1, Mazzo 1, No. 1) and "Dame Ambroise de Saint-Joire", named in 1292 as one of the first religieuses of the Carthusian nunnery of Mélan (Abbé H. FEIGE, *Histoire de Mélan*, 1898, p. 42).

For James's direct concern with the works at Conway we have ample documentary evidence and many of the details have already been published.⁴⁸ What is perhaps of greatest interest in the present context is the association with him, in the direction of the Conway operations, of Otto de Grandson's kinsman and deputy Sir John de Bonvillars, of whom mention has been made already and whom we shall hear of again at Harlech. Thus the contract or "task" of Master Henry the carpenter for certain work on the staircase to the king's apartment and on an "oriel" in the middle of the castle was assigned jointly by Bonvillars and Master James:

... *eidem Henrico pro fractura graduum camere Regis in castro predicto et pro oriolo in medio castro factis ad tascham predicto Henrico traditam per dominum J. de Bonvillar' et Magistrum Jacobum.*⁴⁹

The student of Savoy archives will recall the precisely similar terms in which task-work was assigned on behalf of Count Philip in 1274-5 at Bourg-en-Bresse:

*In domo domus fori facta, in taschiam datam per dominum P. de Langes militem, dominum Johannem de Masoz militem et Magistrum Jacobum lathomum Guidoni et Martino de Molend per litteras ipsorum quas reddunt, vijxx iij.lib. ...*⁵⁰

Or again at St. Laurent-du-Pont:

(a) *In stipendiis (of 288 men) operancium ... in fossato de leyreta (l'Héréttang) et cindencium nemus in alveo dicte aque, et tunc fuit datam in tascham dictum opus Magistro P. de Falaverio per Magistrum Jacobum, xij. lib. x.s.v.d.*⁵¹;

(b) *Idem libravit Magistro Garnerio terriliatori pro domo tegularie facienda..., per compositionem factam cum eo per dominum Petrum de Langes, dominum Johannem de Masout, Hugonem Boterie et Magistrum Jacobum, ... xxv.lbr.vienn.*⁵²

Most interesting of all at Conway, perhaps, is the fact that in 1286, a year for which we have detailed particulars of construction work on the walls of the town, the operations were in the hands of a group of mason contractors headed by a certain John Francis. The Conway work as a whole bears many of the resemblances, both of architectural and constructional technique, to the contemporary military works of the counts of Savoy that we shall be considering more closely insofar as they occur also at Harlech. Given this fact, and given also the fact of the connection

⁴⁸ The fullest account now available is in *A History of the King's Works*, London, 1963, i, pp. 337-54.

⁴⁹ "L", E 101/485/28.

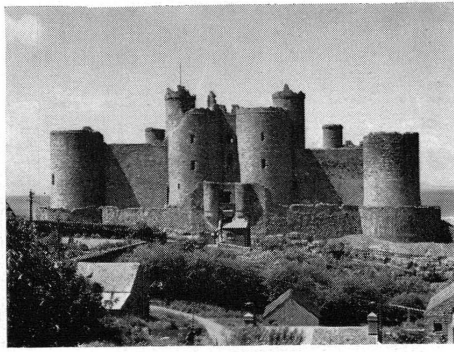
⁵⁰ "D", roll B. 7079.

⁵¹ "C", Inv., 32, Fo. 14, Mazzo, No. 66 (ii).

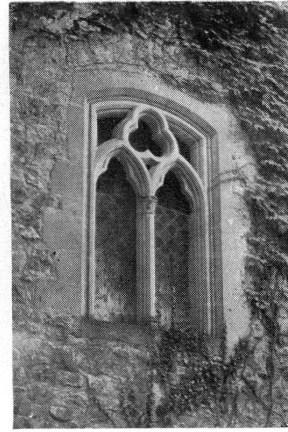
⁵² *Ibid.*, No. 66 (i); master Garnerius also appears at Evian in 1271-2 (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 207).



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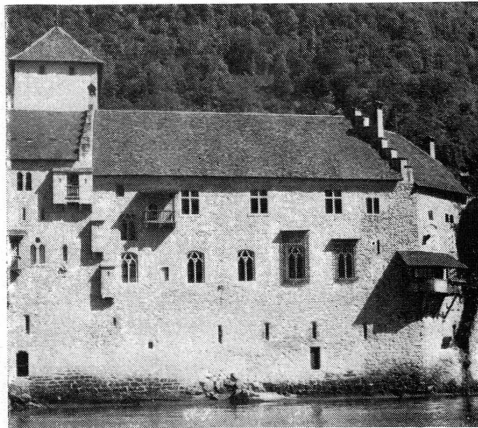
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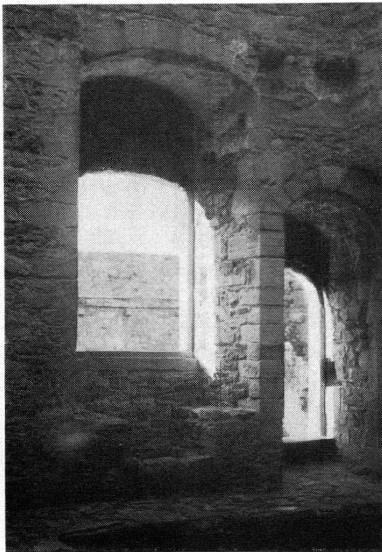
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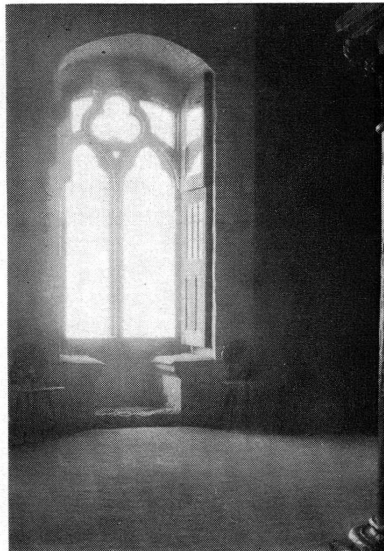
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7

Plate IV. *Fenestration.* - 1. Harlech Castle from E. - 2 and 3. Windows at Harlech, S. side of gatehouse (left) and Chillon, courtyard side of Bâtiment "Q" (right). - 4 and 5. Windows at Harlech, W. side of gatehouse (left) and Chillon, lake side of Bâtiment "Q" (right). - 6 and 7. Window embrasures at Harlech, W. side of gatehouse (left) and Chillon, lake side of Bâtiment "Q" (right).

with those works exemplified by the presence at Conway of such figures as de Bonvillars and Master James himself, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that in this John Francis we are probably face to face with the "Johannes Franciscus" who was given a payment of 75 shillings Laus' at Chillon in 1266 at the same time as another payment of 20 pounds Laus' was made to "Magister Johannes lathomus"⁵³, no doubt the "Master John the father of Master James" of whom we heard at Yverdon four years earlier, and that he in turn is probably none other than the "Franciscus cementarius" who built a new apartment beside the donjon at Conthey in 1258⁵⁴, erected the donjon at Saillon (and perhaps that of Brignon also)⁵⁵ in 1261-2, and shared the task of constructing two chambers in the Château de Chillon itself.⁵⁶ In their siting in relation to terrain, as also in the texture and *appareil* of their masonry, the walls of Saillon, though on a smaller scale, have much in common with those of Conway. It has been said, not without reason, that the castle and town walls of Conway taken together combine to form "incomparably the most magnificent of Edward I's Welsh fortresses".⁵⁷ Here, if we are right, it can also be said, not without interest, that not only those who directed but also some who executed the construction of these noble monuments of military architecture had learned their trade and gained their skill while working on the castles of the Valais and the Vaud. John Francis is last heard of in 1296 at Beaumaris, the latest of the Welsh castles to be begun under Master James's direction, when he contracted with two other masons for the provision of 14,000 freestones for the works.⁵⁸ It is noteworthy that the title of "magister" is never accorded in the records either to the "Franciscus cementarius" of Conthey, Saillon and Chillon, or to the "Johannes Franciscus" of Chillon, or to the "John Francis" of Conway and Beaumaris; this in itself seems to be an additional pointer to their identity.

4. HARLECH CASTLE, 1283-90

(a) *The evidence of the records*

We may now turn to consider rather more fully the building of the castle of Harlech and the diverse Savoyard connections which both its fabric and its early

⁵³ "T", Inv. Sav., 69, Fo. 5, Mazzo 1, No. 3 (c), dorso.

⁵⁴ CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 26.

⁵⁵ L. BLONDEL, *Le château de Brignon, Vallesia*, t. IV, 1949, p. 30.

⁵⁶ "Idem (sc. P. Mainier, custos operum domini) solvit Francisco, et Stephano de Arbo-renges, de summa xliij librarum que debebantur eis pro duabus cameris faciendis in casali retro turrim de Alingio in taschiam, xliij lib., et sic soluti sunt de toto" (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 62.)

⁵⁷ Sir GORONWY EDWARDS, *Edward I's Castle-building in Wales, Procs. of the British Academy*, t. XXXII, 1946, p. 38.

⁵⁸ "L", E 372/158.

history seem to display.⁵⁹ The very ground on which the castle stands appears to have been captured from the Welsh under Savoyard leadership, the first mention of the place in the records being in a note of payment of £20 to Otto de Grandson for bringing up a force of 560 foot-soldiers to Harlech between 19 and 23 April 1283.⁶⁰ Money for building works was already being despatched there during May, and during June and July at least 25 masons and quarriers, with a horse to carry their tools, were sent across the mountains from Conway, where Master James of St. George had set up his headquarters; unfortunately the record does not give their names.⁶¹ King Edward was himself at Harlech from 17 to 20 August, leaving its affairs from that day forward in the hands of a small group of squires of the royal household, of whom two, John Cosyn, *alias* "John Cosyn de Grandisono", and Ebulo de Montibus were Savoyards.⁶² In October 1285 Sir John de Bonvillars, Otto's personal deputy as justiciar of North Wales, was made castellan of the still unfinished castle, receiving a special wage of 4s. a day for himself and his wife.⁶³ The appointment to Harlech of this prominent Savoyard, whom we have already encountered in connection with the works of Conway and who we know had a supervisory responsibility for the works in Wales in general⁶⁴, is in itself of great interest, and may help to explain why Harlech in particular embodies features which, as we shall shortly see, are plainly derived from his own homeland. It is remarkable, too, that on his death in 1287 his widow Agnes was allowed to retain the constablership of the castle and to hold it until, in 1290, it was granted to no less a figure than the master of the king's works, James of St. George himself.

Let us now look at what the detailed series of accounts, which survive in their entirety for Harlech for the year 1285-6⁶⁵, have to tell us about some of those who were employed on the works. Let us first consider some of the names of those who are recorded, every two weeks throughout the season, as receiving payment for horses used in carting such necessary materials as sand, lime and iron to the castle, either from the sea close at hand or from Conway, 65 km. away. Two successive

⁵⁹ See also *A History of the King's Works*, i, pp. 357-65.

⁶⁰ ... *pacatum domino Othoni de Grandisono ad sustentacionem D. et lx. peditum secum euncium de castro de Bere usque Hardelech, xx.li.* ("L", C 47-2/4).

⁶¹ "L", E 101/351/9.

⁶² "L", E 101/4/1 and 4/8.

⁶³ *Calendar of Welsh Rolls*, p. 302.

⁶⁴ This is clear from the record of his stay in Wales to supervise the works of the king's castles in 1283 (... *Johanni de Byueillard militi eunti in Walliam ad supervidendum castra domini Regis ibidem precepto Regis, pro suis expensis eundo, morando et revertendo...*), "L", E 101/351/12). The terms of this entry strikingly recall those used to describe Sir John de Masot's visits to Saillon in 1261 (*In expensis domini Iohannis de Masot ad supervidendum ibi situm turris per tres dies vj.sol.vj.den.*, CHAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 68) and to Salins in 1267 (... *domino Johanni de Masouz moranti apud Salin pro dictando opere putei de Salino, xxix.lib.xix.s.vj.d.* ("C", Inv., 51, Fo. 257, Mazzo 1, No. 1.)

⁶⁵ "L", E 101/485/26 and 27, now tabulated in full in *A History of the King's Works*, 1963 ii, pp. 1030-1035.

entries of this kind are here reproduced as Fig. 2. If we tabulate the names these entries show, we find they are as follows:

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Collard clericus | John le Colier |
| Robert de Walden | Gilbertus clericus |
| John le Hore | Robert Scot |
| Adam Boynard | Perottus clericus |
| Gilet | |

These names, with a number of others not shown in the extract here selected, recur again and again throughout the account, and it is clear, from the fact that it is sometimes recorded that there are over 20 others *unnamed* being paid at the same time for the same kind of services, that they belong to persons of consequence in the hierarchy of the works. What was their business? Were they simply transport contractors who brought their horses and carts and let them out on hire? At first sight it would seem surprising in this context to find no less than three of the figures so engaged described as “clericus”, though this could merely mean that for the purposes of the Harlech operations they were qualified to act as “clerks of works” without necessarily being clerks in the more general sense of the word. This, however, hardly seems a sufficient answer. Fortunately we are given a clue as to the true character of at any rate some of these men by the fact that we know from another source⁶⁶ that one of them, Robert de Walden, was a master mason. Moreover in the corresponding account for Conway, at least four of those paid for transport services are also named elsewhere in the record as masons.⁶⁷ If Robert de Walden, then, why not others? And here, as the writer believes, is to be found the true explanation of “Gilet”, who in this simple form, or as “Gylet” or “Gillet”, is named six times in this account without any qualification of origin or *métier*.

We have seen above how in the summer of 1282, at Aberystwyth, Master Giles of St. George makes a sudden appearance in the English records as “Magister Egidius de Sancto Georgio cementarius”, and we have suggested his identification with “Giletus de Sancto Gerogio lathomus”, joint builder with his brother Tassin, in 1279-80, of the tower of Saxon. It is the writer’s suggestion that the “Gilet” of the Harlech account of 1285-6 is our friend of Saxon and Aberystwyth once again, and that at a castle where even the castellan and his lady were as at home in Savoy as in Wales he would be so well known, perhaps even so “popular”, as to need to be given no title, no surname, to distinguish him in such a record as we are considering. If we are right in this suggestion, it will follow that, under the overall supervision of Master James, Master Giles of St. George will have played a principal part

⁶⁶ J. H. HARVEY, *A Dictionary of English Medieval Architects*, London, 1954, p. 275.

⁶⁷ “L”, E 101/485/28.

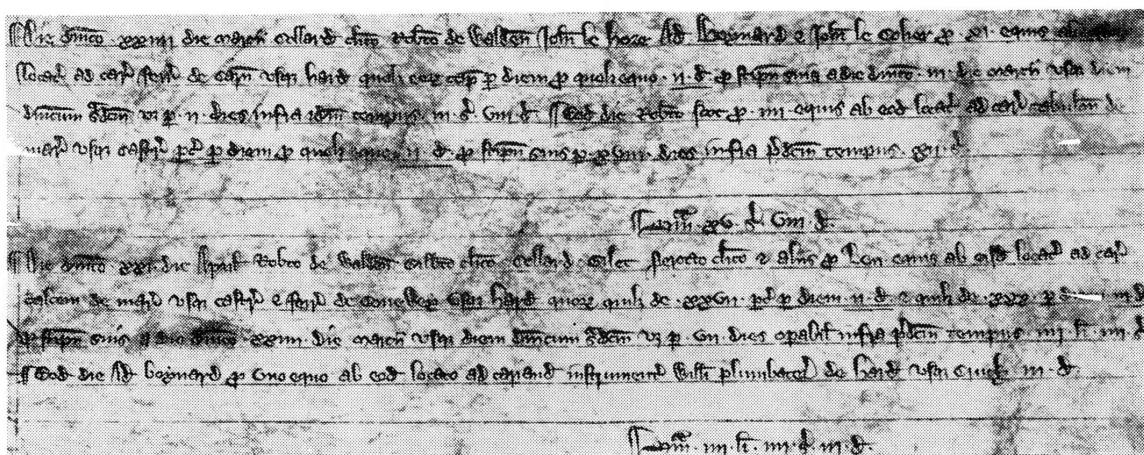


Fig. 2. Extract from roll of payments for carriage of materials to Harlech Castle, showing sums paid during 4 weeks ending 21 April 1283. (London, P.R.O., E 101/485/27).

in the construction of Harlech Castle, a probability that will cause no surprise to anyone who compares the details of its masonry with those to be seen at Saxon.⁶⁸

Granted that we are on the right track so far, there is reason to think that others of those named in our list beside "Gilet" at Harlech may earlier have worked with him at Saxon. What of Adam Boynard? Who, after reading what has gone before and being familiar with the Saxon building accounts⁶⁹, cannot but be struck by the similarity of this name "Boynard" to the "Beynardus rex ribaldorum" who helped to prepare that tower's foundations? Is this mere coincidence? I think not. The forename of "Boynard" at Harlech is Adam: the surname, or nickname, of "Beynardus" at Saxon is "rex" (*ribaldorum*). That the two are in fact one emerges, by the luckiest of chances, from a record on the Household Roll of Count Amadeus V (Journal de la Dépense du Comte) of the gift at Cambrai, at Christmas 1296, of

⁶⁸ It is significant that the writer, in the course of searching a great number of the Savoy castellans' accounts preserved in the archives at Turin, Chambéry and Dijon for the period 1280-1300, has found no further mention of Giletus de Sancto Georgio after the Saxon accounts of 1279-80. His brother Tassin, on the other hand, whose first mention is at Romont in 1272 (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, ii, p. 289), and who makes no appearance in any of the surviving accounts of the works in Wales, continues to be named in the Savoy rolls until at least as late as 1291 when, as "Magister Tassinus", he was paid 305 livres viennois for the works of Treffort and St. André ("D", roll B. 7083); very detailed accounts of the Treffort works, 1290-1306, for the most part executed "ad tascham" by Master Girard Guioti "lathomus", are preserved at Dijon (rolls B. 10146-10149 and B. 7088). As to Master Giles, nothing is known of his subsequent employment in Wales after 1286, but he may very well be the "Master Giles the mason" who was working in Scotland in 1304 (*Cal. of Documents relating to Scotland*, ii, p. 399), when the works in Wales had been suspended and Master James of St. George and many others were with King Edward's forces in the north.

⁶⁹ "T", Inv. Sav., 69, Fo. 5, Mazzo 1, No. 7; Fo. 69, Mazzo 1, No. 1 (3 and 9a).

100 shillings to "the king called Adam" (Regi dicto Adam), a gift which incidentally was made at the same time as one of 50 shillings to William of Pontefract the coachman (quadrigario) and Richard his companion "redeuntibus in Angliam".⁷⁰

If Gilet and Adam Boynard, what of Perottus? If our first two identifications are sustained, is it not likely enough that this Perottus "clericus", whose horses share the burden of hauling sand and lime and stone to the castle of Harlech in 1286, is in fact the same individual as the Perretus "Flamen" who was paid for part of the task of moving soil from the site of the castle of Saxon in 1280 and who, as Perretus "de Proinel" ⁷¹, is named in the same account as having undertaken the roofing of Gilet and Tassin's new tower?

And lastly, since we need not concern ourselves here with John le Hore, John le Colier, Robert Scot and Gilbert "clericus", what are we to say of Collard? It can be stated at once that in English records of the thirteenth century this name is uncommon to the point of rarity. Nor, seemingly, is it much better known in those of Savoy: so much so, that in a far-ranging search of the archives at Turin, Dijon and Chambéry the writer has found only one example of it. This, the more interestingly in view of what we have said of a possible Picardy origin for Perottus, is at Treffort, in 1303, where a carpenter named Collard is explicitly said to be a Picard.⁷² It is indeed possible that this Collard working in Bresse in 1303 is the Collard "clericus" named at Harlech in 1286. But another solution of the problem suggests itself. Just as the form "Tassardus" is found as a variant of "Tassinus", so "Colardus" may sometimes be an alternative for "Colinus". Now we know that, at any rate in 1296, "Colinus clericus" was the name of Master James of St. George's own clerk.⁷³ One is therefore led to ask whether this may not be the real identity of the mysterious "Collard clericus" of the Harlech account of ten years earlier.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ "T", Inv. Sav., 38, Fo. 46, Mazzo 2, No. 5.

⁷¹ The reading is uncertain and should perhaps be "Proiuel": possibly from Péruwelz, between Tournai and Mons, whose sons might well be known indifferently as Flemings or Picards. The questions arise, therefore, (i) as to whether our Perretus "Flamen" named at Saxon in 1279-80 should not be equated with the Perrinus "Pichardus" named as working at Evian in 1271-2 (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 207); (ii) as to whether, Petrus and Perottus being commonly interchangeable, the "Perottus clericus" employed at Harlech in 1286 is not probably to be equated with "Petrus Picard" named at the nearby castle of Criccieth in 1295 ("L", E 101/5/18); and (iii) as to whether in fact these are not all simply different versions of one and the same man's name, as written by different clerks in different accounts in different districts. Cf. also Peretus, als. Petrus "lo Mazon", named at Monthey in 1274-5 (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, pp. 251, 255).

⁷² ... *pro domicilio cooperture turris supra portam quod fuerat combustum per incendium faciundo de novo per manum Colardi carpentarii Picardi...* ("D", roll B. 10149).

⁷³ "L", E 36/202, p. 79.

⁷⁴ One would naturally expect Master James's clerk to have been a Savoyard, and one asks whether this may not be the same as the "Colin" of whom there are a dozen mentions, all similarly in single-name form, in the Savoy Household Roll of 1271-2, when he was evidently a trusted servant of the Count (CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, vol. ii, *passim*).

(b) *The evidence of the architecture*

What visible witness, then, does the castle of Harlech present of an identifiably Savoyard contribution and, in particular, how far does its architectural character reflect the presence among its builders of men who, if our identifications are correct, were not only familiar with the works of the counts of Savoy at Chillon and St. Georges, Saillon and Saxon and Châtel-Argent, and with those of the Bishop of Sion at La Bâtia, but had in some cases actually participated in them? The relationship shows itself in five characteristic features, to which we may now refer in turn.

(i) *Use of helicoidal and inclined scaffolds.* All the main towers at Harlech exhibit striking examples of helicoidal lines of putlog holes, closely comparable to those to be seen on the *donjons circulaires* of Savoy, and especially similar to those of the tower of Saxon (Pl. 1). Nor was the use of this technique of construction confined in North Wales to the round towers flanking the curtains. At Harlech, as also at Conway and Beaumaris, inclined lines of putlog holes are a prominent feature of the curtain walls themselves. The same practice may be observed on the west curtain wall at Saillon, and some slight indications of its use also appear to remain on the inner face of the eastern range of apartments at St. Georges-d'Espérance.

(ii) *Use of the full-centred semi-circular arch.* The round-headed arch is rarely to be found in English building after the end of the 12th century. Its emergence in the North Wales castles in the 1280's is therefore the more remarkable and requires explanation. At Harlech examples of its use are to be seen in the outer gate arch, in window embrasures in the two eastern corner towers, in the great arch spanning the ground floor of the southern gatehouse tower, and over the first-floor doorway on the side of the gatehouse facing the courtyard. The outer gate arch bears the closest possible resemblance to the *Porte du Sex* and *Porte de Leytron* at Saillon, as also to two gateways in the castle of S. Giorio in Val di Susa; the wide arch in the south gatehouse tower is of very similar pattern. Original round-headed window embrasures similar to those in the S.E. and N.E. towers at Harlech are to be seen in several of the Savoy castles, notably at Champvent, at Estavayer, and in the surviving S.E. tower at St. Georges-d'Espérance. Both at St. Georges and at Yverdon there are vestiges of narrow round-headed doorways at first-floor level, now blocked in each case, which parallel the first-floor door on the courtyard side of the Harlech gatehouse. Comparable also are the little door of 1342 at the S.W. corner of Room "W" at Chillon⁷⁵, and the entrance doors of the donjons of Saillon, Saxon

⁷⁵ A. NAEF, *Chillon : la camera domini*, p. 104.

and La Bâtia.⁷⁶ It may be significant that all the full-centred arches at Harlech occur at levels already built or building by 1286, i. e. before the departure of Master James of St. George to Gascony in 1287, and none in parts of the castle known to have been built between 1287 and 1289.

(iii) *Design of latrine shafts.* Attention has been drawn elsewhere to the affinity of design exhibited by the latrine shafts of Harlech, Conway and Rhuddlan with those of Yverdon and St. Georges.⁷⁷ Here it is sufficient to recall the remarkably close approximation between the external dimensions of one of the Harlech shafts (2.65 m. sur 0.651 m.) and its counterpart at St. Georges (2.45 m. sur 0.625 m.).⁷⁸ Perhaps even more remarkable, however, is the occurrence at Harlech of a very distinctive corbelled garderobe turret which so far as is known is the only example of its type in the British Isles, but which is nevertheless virtually a replica of the twin garderobe turrets constructed on the N.W. face of the castle of La Bâtia in the course of the reparations effected by the works of c.1281.⁷⁹ It seems impossible to doubt that this unique feature of Harlech is derived from La Bâtia (Pl. V, 3, 4). Furthermore the round-backed fireplaces which are distinctive of the earlier, 1283-6, work at Harlech closely parallel the form of a fireplace immediately adjacent to the corbelled turrets at La Bâtia.

(iv) *Design of windows.* It can hardly be accidental that, as originally built, the series of great two-light windows that adorned the principal residential chambers designed for Sir John and Lady Agnes de Bonvillars in the gatehouse at Harlech bore a marked resemblance to the windows of Peter of Savoy's later work at Chillon, i. e. those of the *domus clericorum*, of the hall of the châtelain ("Bâtiment Q"), and those on the south side of the ground floor of the "Tour du Duc" and formerly on the east side of the *camera domini*.⁸⁰ Naef considered the type to be derived from windows of about 1240 in the palace of the counts of Champagne at Provins.

There are eight of these windows at Harlech. Six, three on the first and three on the second floor, face west towards the court-yard and the evening sun (Pl. IV, 4); these have all been diminished in height externally, but the dimensions of their embrasures remain unchanged (Pl. IV, 6). Two others, at the N. and S. ends of the upper floor respectively, retain both their internal and external dimensions unaltered (Pl. IV, 2) and preserve, between the one and the other, sufficient vestiges of mullion, transom and twin trefoiled heads to permit the drawing of the reconstruction here reproduced:

⁷⁶ In the case of the last named the doorway is an insertion made in medieval times, and may belong to the repairs of c. 1281.

⁷⁷ *Antiquaries Journal*, t. XXXIII, pp. 43-4.

⁷⁸ For illustrations, see *ibid.*, Pl. XIII.

⁷⁹ A. NAEF, in *Indicateur des Antiquités suisses*, 1900, p. 192 and Fig. 51.

⁸⁰ A. NAEF, *Chillon: la camera domini*, pp. 36-38.

As surviving grooves show, glazing was confined to the tracery lights above the transom, which were additionally provided with small shutters; the main rectangular lights below were provided with shutters only. With the division between plain square-headed lights below the transom and twin trefoil heads above, the Harlech windows achieve a compromise between the Chillon type and the more simple rectilinear treatment adopted at Yverdon and St. Georges⁸¹; the latter certainly show marked affinities with the *croisées* at Provins.

There is also a most striking correspondence of dimension between the embrasures of the Harlech windows and those at Chillon. This similarity, which will at once be apparent from Plate IV, 6, 7, may be demonstrated by means of the following diagram and table of measurements⁸²:

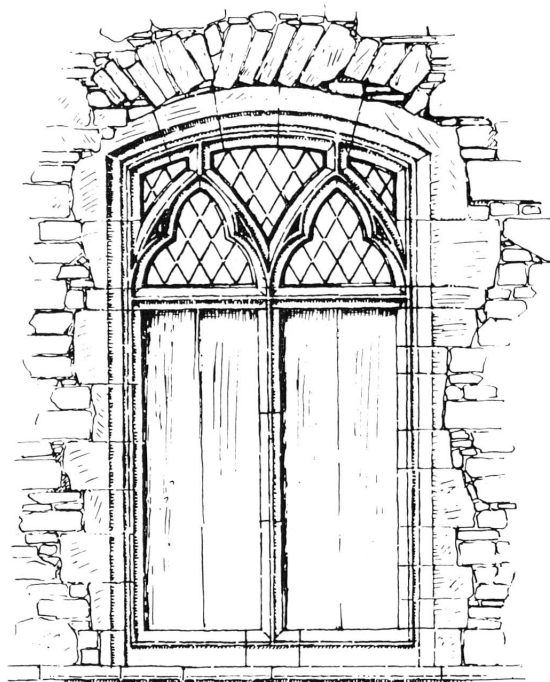


Fig. 3. Harlech Castle. Reconstruction drawing of second-floor window on S. side of gatehouse.

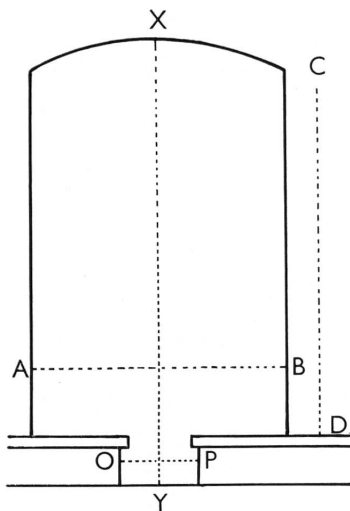


Fig. 4

Measurements in metres

| | Harlech | Chillon | | | | |
|-----|---------|---------|------|------|------|------|
| | | i | ii | iii | iv | v |
| A-B | 1.52 | 1.53 | 1.53 | 1.53 | 1.53 | 1.45 |
| X-Y | 3.88 | 3.86 | 3.86 | 3.74 | 3.62 | 3.58 |
| C-D | 3.09 | 2.93 | 2.93 | 2.93 | 2.78 | 2.77 |
| O-P | 0.88 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.81 | 0.84 | 0.76 |

- * S. window, 2nd floor of gatehouse.
- i-iv Windows on Lake side, "Bâtiment Q", south to north.
- v S.E. window of *Pelium*, "Bâtiment G".

⁸¹ *Antiquaries Journal*, t. XXXIII, Pl. XII.

⁸² The general correspondence of proportion and similarity of treatment first struck me when I was looking at Naef's measured drawing of one of the embrasures in the *domus clericorum* (*Chillon: la camera domini*, p. 20, fig. 17). I thereupon made my own measurements at Harlech, at the same time asking my friend M. J.-P. Chapuisat to take the corresponding dimensions at Chillon, with the results here set out.

(v) *Embellishment of crenellation.* At Conway the battlements of both the castle and town walls were originally surmounted by little stone pinnacles, three to each merlon; on the town walls only a very few fragments of these now survive, but on the castle the remains of this highly attractive decorative finish are still plentiful, especially on the two western towers (Pl. V, 5). The fortunate survival of an extensive series of merlons similarly embellished with triplets of pinnacles at the castle of S. Giorio in the Val di Susa shows that the same practice was followed in Savoy (Pl. V, 6), and probably provides us with evidence, otherwise now completely lost, for the original finish of the crenellation of many of the *donjons circulaires*, Saillon and Saxon among them. M. Blondel has pointed out to me that what appear to be vestiges of similar pinnacles are to be seen in old photographs of the town wall at Saillon⁸³, and also perhaps at La Rochette.⁸⁴ From a distance the eye of faith may also discern the stump of a single pinnacle on one of the merlons of the donjon of Châtel-Argent, and another single survivor may still be seen on the curtain wall of the castle of Montjovet in the Val d'Aosta.

At Harlech the crenellation has for the most part disappeared, and even on the few merlons that survive very little of the original cresting is still to be seen. In one single instance, however, namely on a merlon above the east side of the gatehouse, enough of the bed of the cresting is left to retain, set in its centre, the vertical root of a vanished upright stone: slight but sufficient evidence, there need be little doubt, that the crenellation of Harlech castle, like that of the castles of Conway and S. Giorio, was once crowned with triplets of stone pinnacles.

5. EPILOGUE: THE CARPENTERS PHILIP AND MASTER THEOBALD OF ST. GEORGE

Philip "Sente", principal carpenter for the construction of the roof of the donjon at Flint in 1286⁸⁵, appears likely to be identical with the Philip "of Ewyas" (in Herefordshire) named as a principal carpenter at Caernarvon Castle in June-July 1295⁸⁶; with the "Philip of Ewyas" named at Vale Royal Abbey, Edward I's new foundation in Cheshire, in 1278-80⁸⁷; and with "Philip the carpenter" who (i) is listed as a burgess at Caernarvon in 1298⁸⁸, (ii) was paid for executing the timber work of the "Beleestre" tower in Caernarvon Castle in 1305⁸⁹ and (iii) was the leader of 10 carpenters felling and preparing timber for the hall over the King's Gate at Caernarvon in July 1320.⁹⁰ That he is to be identified with the "Philip the

⁸³ SOLANDIEU, *Les châteaux valaisans*, Lausanne, 1912, p. 43.

⁸⁴ L. BLONDEL, *Châteaux de l'ancien diocèse de Genève*, Pl. XV.

⁸⁵ "L", C 47/3/52, No. 31.

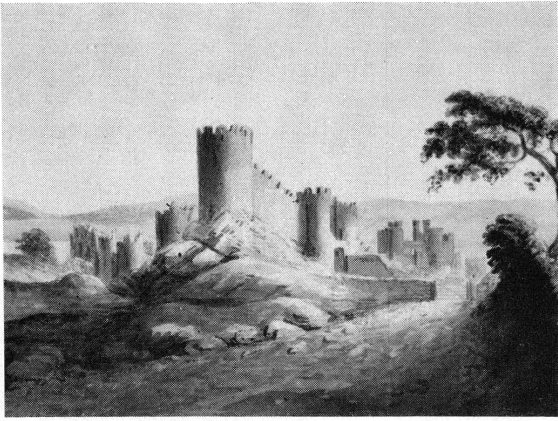
⁸⁶ "L", E 101/486/8.

⁸⁷ "Ledger-Book of Vale Royal Abbey", *Lancs. and Cheshire Record Soc.*, vol. 68, pp. 201-12.

⁸⁸ "L", Rentals and Surveys, 17/86.

⁸⁹ "L", SC 6/1211/2.

⁹⁰ "L", E 101/487/2.



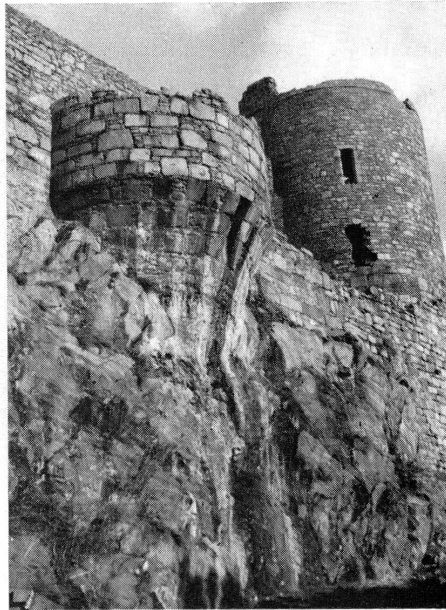
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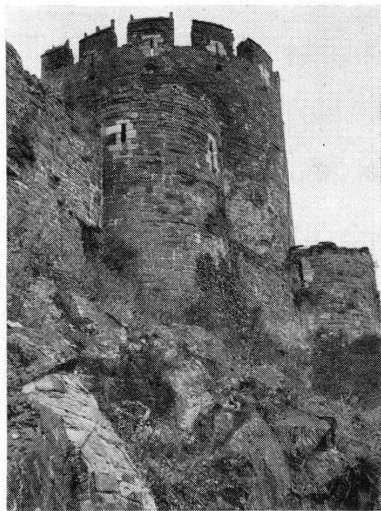
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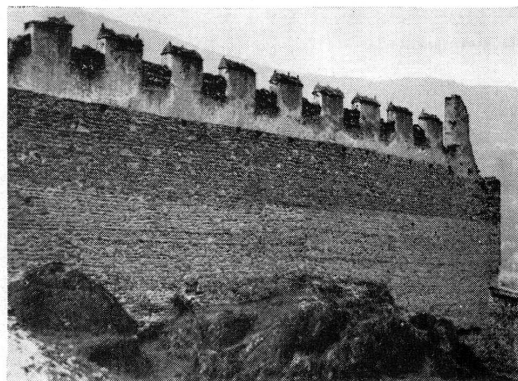


Plate V. - 1 and 2. *Similarity of siting*. Left, Conway (1283-7), water-colour by Moses Griffith, 1806; right, Saillon (1261-2 and earlier), view from S. - 3 and 4. *Corbelled garderobes*. Left, Martigny, château de la Bâtia (c. 1281); right, Harlech Castle (1283-7). - 5 and 6. *Pinnacles (cornetti) on battlements*. Left, Conway Castle, S. W. Tower (1283-6); right, castello di S. Giorio, Susa (early 14th century).

carpenter of St. George” who received *ex gratia* payments (“dona”) of 40 shillings from Count Philip of Savoy at his castle of St. Georges-d’Espérance in December 1274 and July 1275⁹¹ seems also highly probable. He would not have been the only English carpenter working for the counts of Savoy at about that time: for, as we have already noted, Berteletus, one of the carpenters employed on Peter’s work at Chillon and Yverdon, where he shared the “task” of building two superimposed halls (*pro duabus aulis una super aliam*), was also an Englishman.

It also appears likely that the Master Theobald de Waus, “king’s carpenter”, who in 1277 was appointed to carry timber from Hampshire to the works of the Tower of London and who in that connection rebuilt a bridge over the River Kennet at Burghfield near Reading⁹², is to be identified with the Master Theobald the carpenter who was working with Berteletus and others at Chillon in 1266⁹³ and with Philip at St. Georges-d’Espérance in 1274-5 (when Theobald also received “dona” of 40 shillings and made and put up three shutters (*fenestre*) in the count’s wardrobe there), and who appears in Savoy again at intervals from 1281 to 1290 when, as “Master Theobald of St. George, carpenter”, he was sent for to assign tasks (*pro taschiis dandis*) at the count’s castle of Le Bourget.⁹⁴

If these identifications are correct, we have the extremely interesting picture of two carpenters working side by side, probably in association with Master James of St. George, at St. Georges-d’Espérance in 1274-5; moving to England, the one to the king’s works at the Tower of London, the other to those of Vale Royal, two or three years later; the one, Theobald, returning to Savoy when the Tower works were finished and remaining there probably for the rest of his career; the other, Philip, staying on in the king’s service in Wales to what by 1320 – when Otto de Grandson was 82 and Master James had been dead nine years – must have been no inconsiderable age. It is noteworthy that, of the two, Theobald is generally, Philip never, referred to as “magister”.

6. CONCLUSION

In the foregoing notes I have attempted to draw together some of the evidence, so much of it now lost or only half discernible, for the leading part played by King Edward I’s Savoyard cousins and their professional servants in the creation of the most notable group of medieval castles in Britain. How many of the building specialists involved were of true Savoyard stock, this we now have no means of telling. We bear in mind the “Flamen’s” and the “Picard’s” and do not forget that the masters of the works who came to Chillon in 1261 came “de ultra Jurim”.⁹⁵ When

⁹¹ “T”, Inv. Sav., 38, Fo. 46, Mazzo 1, No. 4.

⁹² *Cal. Patent Rolls 1272-81*, pp. 214, 408; *Cal. Inquisitions Misc.*, i, p. 350; “L”, C 62/58.

⁹³ “T”, Inv. Sav. 69, Fo. 5, Mazzo 1, No. 3 (c).

⁹⁴ “C”, Inv, 50, Fo. 154, Mazzo 1, No. 1 (ii).

⁹⁵ CHIAUDANO, *F. S.*, i, p. 41.

Master John and his son Master James left their house to make their way towards Yverdon (... *recessit a domo sua veniendo versus Yverdunum*)⁹⁶, we still, alas! do not know whence they came, unless, likewise, it was from beyond the Jura. Nor, perhaps, should we regard the aid rendered to Edward in his hour of need in Wales as representing an entirely “one-way” traffic in the building arts. The cases of Bartlet, Stephen the painter and Philip the carpenter plainly suggest the contrary. There is one thing, however, which seems to stand out clearly. Though two of them were admittedly brothers, Master James, Master Giles, Master Tassin, Master Theobald and Philip the carpenter can hardly *all* have been of one family, and the common surname *de Sancto Georgio*⁹⁷ applied at one time or another to each one of them, points unmistakably to St. Georges-d’Espérance having been regarded, both under Count Philip and under Count Amadeus, as the principal works centre, the *chantier comital*, for all Savoy.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁹⁷ It may be noted that a Master Bernard de Sancto Georgio was master mason at Bordeaux Cathedral in the 1360’s (Archives de Gironde, Série G, fo. 240 v^o and Sér. H, No. 6, fo. 11 v^o): was he or his father perhaps the “Bertrand de Sancto Georgio” who in 1314 was left a bequest of 100 florins under the will of Pope Clement V, Edward I’s former clerk Bertrand de Goth, archbishop of Bordeaux 1300-1305? A Perreninus de Sancto Georgio, *maçon*, was working at Poligny (Jura) in 1429 (P. BRUNE, *Dict. des Artistes et ouvriers d’art de la Franche-Comté*, Paris, 1912, p. 259.



Seal of Sir John de Bonvillars, Deputy Justiciar of North Wales and Constable of Harlech Castle 1285-7, enlarged from the original attached to a deed dated at Evian, 22 March 1279 (Turin, Archivio di Stato, Baronnie de Vaud 27, Mézières 1).

