

## A FRENCH ARMORIAL IVORY OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

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IN the Museum of the Louvre is the right-hand leaf of an ivory Diptych,<sup>(1)</sup> on which, in the left lower spandril, is a shield, engraved with the Cross of St. George, and this ivory, it has been suggested,<sup>(2)</sup> may be of English workmanship of the mid-fourteenth century.

There is, in the collection of the writer, the left-hand leaf of a French ivory Diptych, of the mid-fourteenth century, measuring  $3\frac{11}{16}$  ins. by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ins., which is remarkable in that two heraldic shields appear. This ivory may be described as follows:—In the centre stands the crowned and veiled figure of the Blessed Virgin, wearing a long robe and cloak, holding on her left arm The Infant Child, whom she suckles. To the left is St. John Baptist, the Precursor, clad in a camel-skin robe and a long cloak, who supports with both hands the *Agnus Dei* within a disk, whilst to the right is the crowned and veiled figure of St. Catherine, the "Bride of Christ", who in a long robe and cloak, holds in her right hand a palm and in her left, her emblem, a wheel.<sup>(3)</sup> This scene is represented beneath a triple canopy and above are two armorial shields, that on the left bears the cross of St. George, that on the right a lion with a forked tail.

Assuming the shield, bearing the cross, to be that of the Order of the Garter, founded *c.* 1348, it is clear that the owner of the second shield must be sought among the "founder" knights, and the only knight to bear such arms, *Gules, a forked-tailed lion gold*, was Sir Bartholomew Burghersh, K.G., *ob.* 1370. This ivory is also of unusual interest, in that it represents the Blessed Virgin in her maternal capacity, a mode of treatment almost unknown, so far as I am aware, on ivory tables, though it occurs occasionally in the case of ivory statuettes.

It is also remarkable in that only four other armorial ivories, all English, of mid-fourteenth-century date, are known, viz: two Triptyches of Bishop Graundson of Exeter, and a left leaf of a Diptych, all in the British Museum,<sup>(4)</sup> and the right leaf of another corres-

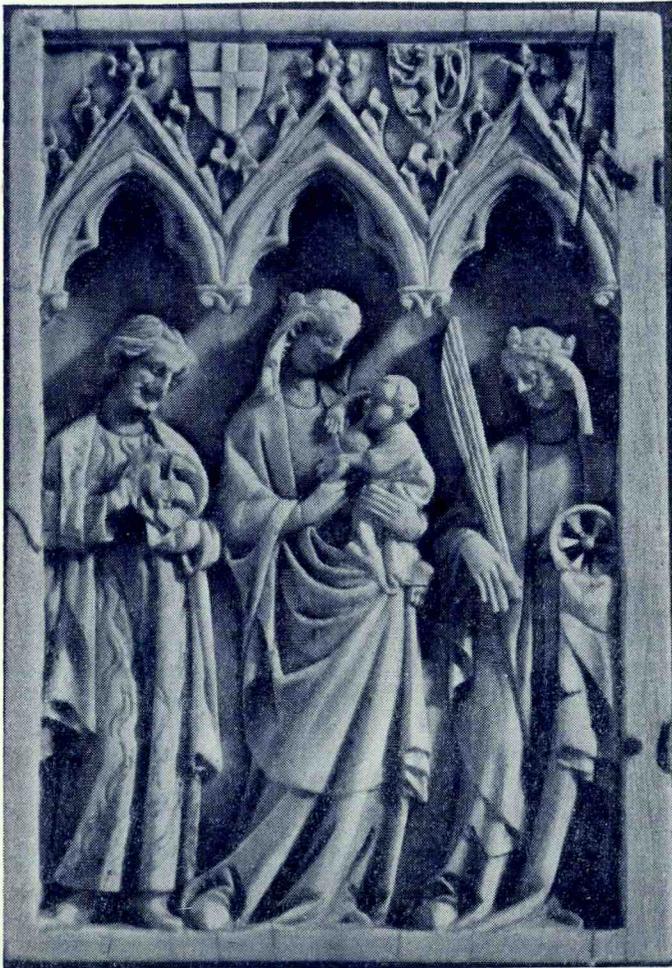
<sup>(1)</sup> Molinier, *Catalogue des Ivoires*, 1896, No. 122.

<sup>(2)</sup> Longhurst, *English Ivories*, pp. 46, 106, Pl. 46, LXII.

<sup>(3)</sup> Longhurst, *Catalogue of Carvings in Ivory, in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, Part II, p. 26, Pl. XXIII, A.555.

<sup>(4)</sup> Dalton, *Catalogue of the Ivory Carvings of the Christian Era in the British Museum*, Nos. 245, 246, Pl. LIV, LV. Longhurst, *English Ivories*, pp. 44, 47, Pls. 45, 46, and Supplementary Plate. Dalton, *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XLIX (August 1926), p. 74, *et seq.*

ponding, but not identical Diptych in the Louvre. It is probable that the new ivory was carved in Paris, at the time of the Treaty of Bretigny, 1360, as Sir Bartholomew Burghersh was one of the English negotiators there. The missing right wing would represent the Crucifixion, between the three Marys to the left of the cross, whilst St. John the Divine and the two Jews would be on the right. The relative positions of the two shields above the canopy would be reversed.



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