

St Michael, Dalston, Cumberland

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Feature Sets (2)

- [Loose Sculpture](#)

Description

Dalston is situated about four miles S of Carlisle, and the church is located in the village square. The church of St Michael consists of a nave, chancel and small transept on the S side. In 1923, Collingwood wrote that the lower courses of the church of St Michael's were of 12thc date and that the chancel was 13thc. The church was partly rebuilt in 1749 and restorations on the chancel carried out in 1873. In 1890, the nave was restored and a N porch added.

Surviving from the 12thc is a single capital, now built into an interior wall in the former N porch (now a toilet facility).

History

There was no Domesday Book for this part of England. In 1777, Nicolson and Burn re-stated Denton (early 17thc) that the Barony of Dalston had been given by Randolph/Ranulf de Meshines, Earl of Cumberland, to Robert de Vallibus, brother of Hubert de Vallibus of Gilsland, and that Robert de Vallibus took the name of Dalston. This was repeated as fact for many years, but Haswell argued against this in his article of 1910. The statement also appears in the *Registrum Prioratus de Wetheral*, but Prescott wrote that this was 'one of those common and inaccurate compilations found in so many of these old Registers and Chartularies'.

Between 1185-7 and 1230, the manor of Dalston was in the hands of the king. In a charter of 1204, one first hears the name of a rector, Americ Thebert, who had been appointed in 1196. Americ was confirmed in the archdeaconry of Carlisle and the church of 'Daleston'. Following this, in 1230, the manor and advowson of the church were granted to the bishop of Carlisle. Not until 1301 is there firm evidence of the manor being in the possession of the Dalston family. In the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1290-1, Dalston was valued at £43.16s.0d., of which £15 was for the '*Porcio Archidiaconi in Ecclesia de Dalston*', £16.0s.0d. for the '*Porcio Scholarum Karli in Ecclesia de Dalston*' and £12.16s.0d. for the '*Vicar*' Ejusdem'. In 1765, with the death of George Dalston, the direct line of the Dalston family ceased and the baronetcy came to an end. The church of Dalston was rectorial up to 1304, after which it was made vicarial with an endowment, as set out in the bishop's ordinance of 1307. The bishop reserved for himself the greater portion of the tithes. George Bewley was vicar of Dalston throughout the Reformation movement. He first appears in 1535 and he remained vicar until his death in 1570.

Features

Loose Sculpture

Scallop capital inside room off NW section of nave



The scallop capital has been built into the NE interior corner of a room. It is clear that the capital was originally attached on one side, but the decoration on the S side cannot be fully determined, as it continues into the wall. The W side is the only complete visible face of the capital. It is carved with two scalloped shields, edged with a double roll of beading set into concave bands. The centre of each shield is carved with a foliate motif with three leaves. The lower cones of the capital are also carved, one with a single foliate form with three leaves emerging at the top. The other is also foliate, but is carved to show a fruit motif, with criss-crossed incised lines, flanked on each side by a leaf. Between the cones is carved a tree- or

bush-like motif with concave branches or leaves pointing upwards. The N corner of this face of the capital is carved with an undecorated, pointed shape, but the outer S corner has a large fruit with criss-crossed lines. Beneath this is what appears to be two leaves above a chevron pattern formed by two small roll mouldings.

On the S side of the capital is another scallop, edged with two bands of beading, but without a decorated centre. Part of a second, beaded scallop appears E of this. The only visible cone on this side is decorated with a triple-leafed motif. Next to this, and probably in the centre of the capital originally, is a motif which resembles a pine tree, with plain central 'trunk' and concave 'branches'. It is similar to the motif on the W side of the capital, but the branches point downwards. The top of the capital is carved with a small plain roll moulding and the necking on the bottom of the capital is flat on its outer face.

Dimensions

Diameter of bottom face	0.255 m
Height	0.30 m
Width of S face	0.18 m
Width of W face	0.31 m

Comments/Opinions

The beaded scallop form and the foliate decorated upper shield are features that appear on a capital in Carlisle Cathedral at the W end of the N nave aisle, while a related 'tree' motif appears both on a S nave arcade capital in the cathedral and on a loose fragment of a capital found on a wall in the cathedral close, subsequently taken inside. Fruit with criss-crossed lines can be found on a capital at Warwick-on-Eden, a church whose carved work appears also to relate to that of Carlisle Cathedral. The most likely date for the Dalson capital is either the 2nd or 3rd quarter of the 12thc.

Bibliography

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Exterior of church from SE

Location

Full screen

Site Location

Dalston

National Grid Reference

NY 370 502

Boundaries

pre-1974 traditional (England and Wales): [Cumberland](#)

now: [Cumbria](#)

Diocese

medieval: [Carlisle](#)

now: [Carlisle](#)

Dedication

now: [St Michael](#)

medieval: [St Michael](#)

Type of building/monument

[Parish church](#)

Report authors

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