

Tullie House Museum – Carlisle

Tullie House Museum was the last visit on a packed and rich itinerary. It provided a sound background to the history of Carlisle, which from the 14th to end of the 16th centuries was an often dangerous Anglo-Scottish border town characterised by raids and counter-raids, murder and reprisal, the 'riding families' fortifying their homes by building bastles (fortified farmhouses) and pele towers.

The most interesting chair in the museum is known as the 'Mounsey Throne'. John Mounsey rebuilt the family home of Patterdale Hall during a period of prosperity in 1677. A sketch plan by Thomas Machell, an antiquarian, drawn about 1680, shows the house with as cross-passage, a communal hall, kitchen, buttery and parlour. The house was probably furnished with the finely carved oak furniture

common in Lake District homes at that time. John Mounsey is understood to have led a group of men from the Dales to repulse the Scots who were on their way to fight for Charles I at Preston. John Mounsey subsequently became known as the 'King of Patterdale' and his chair as 'John Mounsey's Throne'. It bears the initials 'I * M 1677' and his coat of arms.

Having enjoyed Tony Peart's superb Arts & Crafts collection in a domestic setting, Tullie House Museum also afforded an opportunity for further study of an excellent collection of Arts & Crafts ceramics and pre-Raphaelite paintings. The collection also includes two oak and leather armchairs by Arthur W. Simpson of Kendal (1857–1922), of which we illustrate one.

Diana Halliwell



Fig. 26 The Mounsey chair at Tullie House Museum, Carlisle



Fig. 27 Chair by Arthur W. Simpson