'Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede': The Jewellery of Margaret of York and Its Meaning

JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL

The description of Chaucer's squire, from the general prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*,[1] reminds us that well before the time of Margaret of York the combination of red and white roses was nothing new, and that its significance need not be dynastic. In the margins of many folios of the Bedford Hours, for example, red and white roses appear, both in conjunction and separately.[2] They are mingled with other flowers and appear to have no dynastic significance, though it is conceivable that, in the context of a religious text, they have symbolic meaning (being intended, perhaps, to allude either to the Virgin Mary or to the Passion of Christ). In a recent study, Jean Wilson considered the symbolic significance of jewellery associated with Margaret of York as duchess of Burgundy, in the design of which both red and white roses figure.[3] The title of Wilson's paper focussed specifically on the *collier* depicted in the small portrait, said to be of Margaret, and currently in the Louvre Museum. This *collier* does not survive, and Wilson commented that we cannot be certain that it ever really existed (though she is inclined to believe that it did). However, Wilson's text ranged beyond the *collier*, to include discussion of Margaret's crown, now in the treasury at Aachen Cathedral, and other pieces, for as Wilson rightly perceived, the painted *collier* cannot be considered in isolation. As we shall see, the repertoire of decorative elements in the *collier* and the crown is consistent – more so, indeed, than even Wilson realised. Considering these items of jewellery together thus helps to inform our understanding of their possible meaning. The aim of the present paper is to broaden Wilson's discussion of Margaret of York's jewellery by introducing additional evidence. The design and function of the Aachen crown will be re-examined in the light of pictorial and other testimony; the attribution of the Louvre portrait will be discussed, and new evidence in support of Wilson's belief that the Louvre *collier* was a real item of jewellery will be presented.

The Aachen Crown

The crown which Margaret of York presented in 1474 to the Blessed Virgin of Aachen is a small open crown which bears large roses of white enamel, small roses of red and of black enamel, the letters of Margaret's name, and the conjoined initials C and M. At the back of the circlet is an enamelled shield with the arms of Burgundy. There are rows of pearls edging the top and bottom of the circle, and pearls are sprinkled elsewhere on the crown.[4] One word for 'pearls' in French is *marguerites*, so that in a French-speaking context, pearls were an obvious and apposite symbol of Margaret's name. Wilson, however, does not comment on the possible significance of the pearls on the Aachen crown, nor on the presence of the small red and black roses.

Two colour patterns seem to predominate in the crown's decorative scheme: red paired with black, and blue paired with white. The latter pairing seems to require little explanation. Blue and white comprise the principal colours traditionally associated with the soldiery of the Valois dukes of Burgundy.[5] The Burgundian soldiers are said to have worn, *per pale*, white and blue, with a small St Andrew's cross on the blue side. Dr Carol Chattaway has recently argued persuasively that, at least in terms of his issue of textiles, the first Valois duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold, displayed no fixed use of livery colours.[6] However, she has also noted his issue of gifts of a jewelled badge of what he called his 'order of the

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[1] L.B. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, Oxford 1988, p. 24.

[2] J. Backhouse, *The Bedford Hours*, London 1990, plates 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 28, 29, 30-32, 34-37. Roses are not, however, depicted on the heraldic folios, nor on those which portray John of Lancaster and his bride (who, though a Burgundian princess, was not of Lancastrian descent).

[3] J.C. Wilson, '*Richement et pompeusement parée*: the *collier* of Margaret of York and the politics of love in late medieval Burgundy', in *Excavating the Medieval Image. MSS, Artists, Audiences: Essays in honour of Sandra Hindman*, Aldershot 2004, pp. 109-133.

[4] This crown was repaired in 1865, but there is no reason to suppose that its appearance has been altered significantly, though P. Hammond, 'The coronet of Margaret of York', *The Ricardian*, vol. 6 (September 1984), p. 365, n. 4, states that engravings made in 1864 suggest the lettering may have been modified slightly.

[5] N. Michael, *Armies of Medieval Burgundy, 1364-1477*, London 1983, p. 11ff. (J. Backhouse, *The Bedford Hours*, p. 33, suggests that the livery colours of the Valois dukes were green, white and black, but she cites no source for this contention.)

[6] MEDATS Conference, 20 May 2006, 'The Development of Liveries and Uniforms in Europe before 1600'.

Golden Tree'.[7]

> No example of the insignia of the Order of the Golden Tree survives, but the accounts detail it as a brooch or clasp with an eagle and a lion, *enamelled in white*, between which rose a gold tree. Below was a *sapphire* crescent, and around it curled a scroll on which was spelt out the motto "in loyalty" in letters *rouge cler enamel*. It was finished off with *red and blue enamel* leaves.[8]

The colour combination of this badge – white and blue, combined with red – matches the colours ascribed to the Burgundian soldiery. It is also known that in 1468, Margaret of York's husband, Duke Charles the Bold, possessed three gold collars, two of which bore roses enamelled in white and blue.[9] Jean Wilson, however, does not note the potential significance of blue and white in a Burgundian ducal context. Nor does she comment upon the consistent combination of blue stones with white enamelled roses in the decoration of Margaret of York's crown. Yet the use of this colour combination in connection with Margaret was perhaps not accidental. The significance of red and black for the last two Valois dukes of Burgundy, while it has not passed unnoticed, has not hitherto been examined in detail. One possible explanation, however, may lie in the adoption by Philip the Good of the fire-steel as his livery badge. This emblem was also incorporated in the collar of the order of the Golden Fleece. The badge (which was also used by Philip's son, Charles the Bold) represented a steel surrounded by tongues of flame. The natural colours of this badge (dark grey for the steel, and crimson for the flames) thus acquired significance for the ducal house, alongside the earlier Burgundian ducal colours of blue and white. It was perhaps because grey is not an heraldic tincture that its closest heraldic equivalent, black, came to be conjoined with red in this new colour pairing. Wilson noted the significance of red and black as livery colours of Charles the Bold without examining the reason for this, and she cites occasions when Margaret is known to have worn these colours.[10] We may supplement her evidence with the small additional point that on 2 June 1467 Sir John Howard purchased crimson damask and black velvet, together with buckram and gold (the last being possibly in the form of gold braid), from 'Janyn the Kynges wardroper', all for the manufacture of a 'traper'.[11] Given the date, it is likely that Howard's new saddle-cloth was part of the trappings for his ceremonial role at the forthcoming Anglo-Burgundian tournament at Smithfield (where he filled in for his young cousin, the earl marshal) and that crimson and black were chosen in honour of the Burgundian contingent, which was headed by Philip the Good's illegitimate son, Antoine.[12] In addition, Charles the Bold is known to have possessed a Garter (of the English order) of gold, composed almost entirely of red stones and black enamel. This garter was set with four pearls and with nine cabochon rubies (or spinels) framed in gold, in the form of red flowers (roses?). The red flowers formed the buckle and decorative terminal of the garter, and also the dividers between the words of the garter motto, *honny soyt quy mal y panse*, which were composed of black enamel.[13] Wilson notes the presence of the red-and-black colour combination in connection with Margaret's Louvre collar, but she seems not to have remarked that it is present also on the Aachen crown, in the form of pairs of small red and black roses.

There has been some debate as to when, where, and for what purpose, Margaret's crown was made.[14] It has even been suggested that she may never have worn it, but perhaps commissioned it specifically as a votive offering to the Virgin. Adduced in favour of this interpretation are the crown's small size (it has a diameter of only 12.5 cm – too small to fit an adult head around the brows in the usual way), the fact that it is not made of gold, but of silver gilt, and the fact that the crown arguably fits precisely the Aachen cult

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[7] On the existence of collars and badges of such royal 'orders', intermediate between true chivalric orders and livery badges and collars, see R.W. Lightbown, *Medieval European Jewellery*, V&A London 1992, p. 265.

[8] C.M. Chattaway, 'Looking a medieval gift horse in the mouth. The role of giving of gift objects in definition and maintenance of the power network of Philip the Bold', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, no. 114 (Jan. 1999), p. 4. Present writer's italics.

[9] Lightbown, *Medieval and European Jewellery*, p. 286. Charles the Bold's third collar also bore roses, and was set with rubies, pearls and diamonds. This use of red and white stones recalls the decoration of Margaret of York's *collier* (see below).

[10] Wilson, '*Collier*', pp. 110-11.

[11] A. Crawford, ed., *Howard Household Books*, Stroud 1992, part 1, p. 403.

[12] Howard's choice of colours may have had a double significance. Crimson was the livery colour of the Mowbrays, while black was Howard's own livery colour at this time (see J. Ashdown-Hill, Thesis, forthcoming). There is, however, no previous instance of Howard choosing to combine the two colours in a single item.

[13] Lightbown, *Medieval European Jewellery*, plate 98.

[14] See for example Hammond, 'Coronet', pp. 364-65. Hammond speculates that the small size of the crown may indicate that it was made for Margaret to wear in 1461 to her brother's coronation, but his case seems unconvincing. Margaret's head at the age of fifteen would surely have been that of a fully grown adult.

image.[15] It would be quite wrong, however, to assume that it must therefore have been made for the Aachen statue. The use of silver gilt in royal jewellery was quite usual at this period. There is the possibility that the fifteenth-century Aachen image was selected, made or adapted to fit the crown.[16] Moreover the crown does not, in fact, fit the image perfectly. The Virgin Mary holds in her left arm the Christ child who is also crowned. His crown sits on his brow in the normal manner. By contrast Margaret of York's crown is too small to fit the head of the Virgin in the same way, and therefore sits above her brow. Any reaction to the resulting appearance must be subjective, but the effect is, perhaps, not entirely satisfactory, and the circle of the crown appears rather broad when it is worn in this position.[17]

Certainly, there are other possible explanations for the crown's small size. Perhaps it was designed to be worn high on the head, and not around or above the brows. There is evidence in favour of such a premise. First, fifteenth-century illustrations exist of such small crowns being worn around the base of the tall pointed head-dress which is often called the 'hennin' in modern texts, but which seems to have been known to its wearers as an *atour*.[18] Examples of such illustrations will be considered below. Second, we have the existence, within the circle of the crown itself, of a cross bar. This would preclude the crown being pressed down to fit the brows of even a very small human wearer, but might well have been designed in order that when perched high on the head, the crown could be secured to the hair, or to a head-dress, by pins, clips or other devices. It is not certain when this bar was put in place. Evidence derived from fifteenth century paintings (below) does, however, imply that some such point of attachment was employed in the wearing of small crowns like Margaret's. There is therefore no reason to doubt that this concealed cross bar was an original – and indeed essential – part of the crown's design.

A second category of evidence is derived from late fifteenth-century depictions of female crown wearing by Flemish and other artists. Paintings exist by Van der Goes, the Master of the Legend of St Ursula, the Master of the Legend of St Lucy, and by Gerard David which show female saints, the Virgin, or angels, wearing rather small crowns placed towards the top or the back of the head.[19] These characteristics are even more apparent in contemporary Italian paintings (which tend to depict the Virgin crowned more frequently than do the works of Flemish artists). Room 59 of the National Gallery in London contains no less than four paintings by Carlo Crivelli (1430-93) which depict small crowns worn in this way.[20]

In fact, paintings of the Virgin, and of St Catherine, wearing small crowns abound in the art of Crivelli. A single study on the work of this artist illustrates more than twenty such instances.[21] Two examples will be noted here. In the so-called *Madonna della Candeletta*, in the Brera Gallery, Milan, the Virgin is depicted wearing a veil, which is tied to her hair with ribands. Above this she wears a crown which is possibly even smaller than that of Margaret of York. Calculations from the dimensions of her features suggest that the Virgin's crown in this painting has a diameter of between 11 and 12 cm. This crown has no visible means of attachment, but it is worn high on the head, and clearly could not remain in position unless it were pinned or clipped to both the veil and the hair beneath (see figure 2). This crown, together with other small crowns depicted by Crivelli, shares a further feature with the Margaret of York crown, in having a central ornament rising above the circle at the front, which is somewhat larger, and more prominent, than the crown's other points or *fleurons*.

In an altarpiece from Monte S. Martino, Crivelli depicts St Catherine in semi-profile, wearing a small crown (figure 3). This painting is interesting because it shows a string of pearls passing up the side of the head, and apparently crossing beneath the crown. Assuming that it passes over an invisible cross bar such as that which exists within the crown of Margaret of York, this rope of pearls offers one possible indication of a means by which such a tiny crown might be retained in position. Of course, a married woman did not wear her hair loose, like a virgin, so Crivelli's St Catherine can only provide guidance. In any case a riband seems a more likely – and more practical – means of securing a small crown to the wearer's head than a string of pearls.

An alternative way of wearing such a small open crown and holding it in place was for it to be placed around the base of the steeple head-dress (see above). This style is depicted, for example, in an illustration

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[15] R. Marks and P. Williamson, *Gothic; Art for England 1400-1547*, London 2003, p. 154.

[16] Though the Michelin *Green Guide, Germany*, Watford 2000, p. 73, describes the statue as dating from the fourteenth century.

[17] See the illustration of the Virgin of Aachen wearing the crown in Marks and Williamson, *Gothic*, p. 154.

[18] A.F. Sutton, 'Dress and fashions *c.*1470' in R. Britnell, ed., *Daily Life in the Late Middle Ages*, Stroud 1998, p. 10.

[19] J. Lassaigne, *Flemish Painting, the Century of Van Eyck*, [no place of publication] 1957, pp. 114, 152-53, 154, 159, 161.

[20] Crivelli was a Venetian, but worked widely outside Venice.

[21] P. Zapetti, *Carlo Crivelli*, Milan 1961.

in a copy of Giovanni Boccaccio's *De casibus* produced in Bruges for Edward IV in about 1480. The picture represents the suicide of Antony and Cleopatra. The queen wears contemporary fifteenth-century dress, similar to that depicted in manuscript illustrations of Margaret of York. Traditional accounts of Cleopatra's suicide insisted on the fact that she died with her crown on,[22] and in accordance with this tradition, in Boccaccio's illustration, the queen has unlaced her gown to apply the asps, but still wears a small, open crown, around the base of the pointed steeple of her *atour* (figure 4).[23] A further example showing a small crown worn in this fashion is furnished by an illustration of Queen Dido greeting Ascaniud, from a 1469 copy of the *Histoire de Troie*.[24]

The suggestion has been made that Margaret of York's crown may have been made as early as 1461 for the fifteen-year old Margaret to wear to the coronation of her brother, Edward IV.[25] Of course, if the crown was made in 1461, that would have been long before the Burgundian marriage was envisaged. The crown must, in that case, have been quite extensively modified subsequently, to include references to the marriage, in the form of the conjoined initials of Margaret and Charles, red and black roses, and the Burgundian ducal arms at the back of the circle. There is no possible doubt that the leather case which now accompanies the crown must have been made in or after 1468, for it bears the arms of England and Burgundy, and Charles the Bold's cypher.

Whatever the date of the crown's manufacture, there is no reason to doubt that Margaret wore it. Its small size is of no significance in this respect. As we have seen, its design seems to have been entirely consistent with one form and size of female crown fashionable in the second half of the fifteenth century.[26] Paintings provide clear evidence that small crowns of this kind were indeed worn, and sometimes indicate how they might have been kept in place. We know that Margaret was 'rychely coroned' at her wedding in Damme, early on the morning of 3 July 1468,[27] and as Wilson notes, she was still wearing a crown on the occasion of her *joyeuse entrée* to Bruges later that same day. Olivier de la Marche recorded on that occasion that *sur ces cheveulx avoit une riche couronne*.[28] His use of the word *cheveulx* reveals that Margaret was wearing her hair loose (her marriage was still unconsummated), with the crown presumably attached somewhat after the manner depicted by Crivelli.

The Louvre Portrait

Wilson rightly observed that the Aachen crown is not unique amongst Margaret's jewellery in bearing emblems or letters, and in carrying symbolic meaning. While other pieces of her jewellery have not survived, there exists a portrait in the Louvre Museum,[29] which has been identified as depicting Margaret of York and which shows further important items of jewellery. Before we can consider this evidence it is essential to confirm its relevance by establishing that the Louvre portrait can reasonably be attributed to Margaret of York. The painting was first identified as Margaret by Hulin de Loo in 1942.[30] He based his argument on the presence of red and white roses in the painting, which he saw as evidence of Margaret's conjoined Yorkist and Lancastrian descent.[31] In fact, the evidence of the red roses is equivocal, and their characterisation as Lancastrian emblems is certainly suspect. De Loo's original argument for the sitter's identity is therefore weak. Nevertheless, his identification of the small Louvre painting as a representation of Margaret of York was surely correct – but for different reasons, which we must now review.

The painting shows three items of jewellery, all of which have symbolic design content. First, to the

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[22] See, for example, Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, act 5, scene 3: 'Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have immortal longings in me'.

[23] Giovanni Boccaccio, 'The Suicides of Antony and Cleopatra', from *De casibus illustrium virorum et feminarum*, BL Royal MS 14 E. v, f. 348v, published in S. Walker and P. Higgs, eds., *Cleopatra of Egypt*, BM exhibition catalogue, London 2001, p. 345.

[24] Geneva, Collection Bodmer, MS 160, f. 225, illustrated by Sutton in Britnell, *Daily Life in the Late Middle Ages*, p. 15.

[25] Hammond, 'Coronet'. See above, n. 10.

[26] Hammond, 'Coronet', p. 364, suggests that Margaret's crown was a little old-fashioned because non-royal coronets in the 1460s usually had lower points or *fleurons*. It is perhaps debatable whether Margaret's crown qualifies as 'non-royal', however, and the illustrations of royal coronets worn round the base of their *atours* by Cleopatra and Dido, appear to show *fleurons* similar in height to Margaret's.

[27] Hammond, 'Coronet', p. 362, citing S. Bentley, *Excerpta Historica*, London 1831, p. 232.

[28] H. Beaune and J. d'Arbaumont, *Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche*, 4 vols., Paris 1883-88, vol. 3, p. 106.

[29] Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Peintures, inv. R.F. 1938-17, illustrated in L. Huet, *Femmes d'Exception*, Mechelen 2005, p. 5.

[30] Wilson, '*Collier*', p. 5.

[31] Her mother, Cecily Neville, Duchess of York, was the granddaughter of John of Gaunt.

left of the sitter's face there is a pendant jewel hanging from the frontlet of her head-dress. It is in the form of a gold letter B (presumably standing for Burgundy), to which is attached a single large pearl (*marguerite*). Wilson notes the letter B, but does not comment on the likely significance of the pearl. However the combination clearly signifies Margaret's attachment to her new home, and constitutes the first piece of evidence in support of the contention that the portrait represents Margaret.

Secondly, the portrait depicts a brooch, in the form of a gold daisy or marguerite, on the right hand side of Margaret's breast. Wilson rightly interprets this as confirmation of the portrait's identity, and refers to the use of marguerites in the decoration of Margaret's rooms in the ducal palace at Bruges. The use of the daisy flower or marguerite as a name-emblem by women called Margaret in the fifteenth century is very well documented. Margaret of York was by no means the only Margaret to make use of this flower emblem. Henry VI's queen, Margaret of Anjou also employed it. So too did Lady Margaret Beauchamp, Countess of Shrewsbury (the mother of Lady Eleanor Talbot).[32] The countess of Shrewsbury's use of the daisy badge is attested in both of the surviving Talbot books of hours now preserved at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.[33] It is also found on a signet ring, used by her daughter, Lady Eleanor Talbot.[34] This ring was possibly a gift to Eleanor from her mother. Later the daisy badge was taken up and used by Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII. It can be seen, for example, on her 'Foundress's Beaker' at Christ's College, Cambridge.[35]

There seems to be no example of the daisy used as an emblem on extant jewellery associated with Margaret of York. There is, however, one further painted instance, where a gold daisy identical to that shown in the Louvre portrait occurs, again as a brooch, this time pinned to the frontlet of a lady's head-dress, in a miniature of 1480.[36] Examples of the use of daisies in fifteenth century Flemish jewellery certainly exist, albeit without any demonstrable connection to Margaret of York.[37] However, the daisy was an emblem particularly well-suited to painting, and it is found in several manuscript miniatures associated with Margaret of York.[38] It also appears on the medal struck to commemorate her death. In jewellery, pearls were perhaps a more natural *marguerite* emblem, and one which was easier to employ. Pearls were, of course, very widely used in jewellers' work, and were by no means reserved exclusively for patronesses called Margaret. However, we have already seen, that Margaret of York favoured pearls, which occur again, used extensively on another item of jeweller's work commissioned by her, namely the Reliquary of the Calvary which she presented to the church of St Ursmer at Binche.[39] Pearls also occur plentifully in the third and most significant item of jewellery depicted in the Louvre portrait.

This is the large and splendid *collier* (figure 5), which was the key feature of the title of Wilson's paper, and it constitutes the third piece of evidence in support of the Louvre portrait's identity, not for the reasons suggested by de Loo, but for two different reasons. The first of these is that an identical *collier* is depicted in two other surviving representations of Margaret of York, namely two miniatures in the manuscript *Benois seront les Miséricordieux*, now in the Royal Library in Brussels (see below). The second reason for asserting that the Louvre portrait *collier* constitutes evidence that the sitter is Margaret of York is that the repertoire of symbolism present in the *collier* matches that of Margaret of York's crown, the ownership of which has never been in doubt. That this fact is significant can clearly be demonstrated by comparing the design of the *collier* with that of another crown of about the same date: the one belonging to Margaret of York's stepdaughter, Mary of Burgundy.[40] Mary's crown, which is about the same size as Margaret's, and which is also made of silver gilt, is completely different in style from both Margaret's crown and from the *collier* of the Louvre portrait. Mary's crown is adorned with coral (which is not to be found in either of the other items) and it entirely lacks enamelled roses. We may conclude, therefore, that all three items of jewellery depicted in the Louvre portrait bear testimony to the fact that the sitter is none other than Margaret of York.

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[32] J. Ashdown-Hill, 'Lady Eleanor Talbot: new evidence; new answers; new questions', *Ricardian*, vol. 16 (2006), p. 128.

[33] MS. 40-1950 and MS 41-1950, illustrated in Marks and Williamson, *Gothic*, p. 230.

[34] Warwickshire County Record Office, L 1/81.

[35] Illustrated in Marks and Williamson, *Gothic*, p. 250.

[36] BL MS Royal 19 E v, illustrated in C. Weightman, *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, 1446-1503*, Gloucester 1989, p. 138.

[37] BM M&LA AF 2768-70, displayed in gallery 42, case 9, nos. 11 and 13. This jewellery was found in the River Meuse.

[38] *Vie de Sainte Colette*, MS in the convent of the Poor Clares at Ghent, illustrated in Weightman p. 68 (in the foliage entwining the conjoined letters CM); *Registre de la Guild de Sainte Anne à Gand*, Royal Library, Windsor Castle, illustrated in Weightman p.119 (in the margin); Weightman p. 215 (on the reverse of the medal).

[39] Illustrated in Weightman, *Margaret of York*, p. 202.

[40] Bruges, Edele Confrerie van het Heilig Bloed.

Margaret of York's *Collier*

The *collier* shown in the Louvre portrait appears to be made of gold[41] and enamel, and is almost exclusively set with pearls. Between a double row of gold ropes, top and bottom, are arranged roses, enamelled alternately white and red. Each rose is framed by four small black roundels. The red roses all have pearls at their centres and the white roses, cabochon rubies (or more probably spinels). The flowers are linked by open-work elements in gold, in the form of knots. Above the uppermost gold rope are set more pearls, alternately black and white,[42] while from the lowest rope hang letters: gold Cs (for Charles) alternating with intertwined red and black enamelled Ms (for Margaret).[43] Significantly, the overall colour scheme of this collar is gold, white, red and black.

As we have seen, the presence of red roses on this *collier* has excited previous comment and speculation although, strangely, the presence of smaller red roses on Margaret's crown seems to have passed unnoticed. This may be explained by the fact that on the collar the red roses are equal in size to the white, and are therefore more prominent. As we have seen, in the case of the *collier* the explanation has been offered that they may refer to the house of Lancaster, and signify Margaret's maternal descent from John of Gaunt. However, it remains doubtful whether the red rose was really used as an emblem of the house of Lancaster at this period.[44] Secondly, there is the problem that if the red rose (as well as the white) was thought to be an appropriate symbol for Margaret's use by virtue of her own descent, one might wonder why red roses are not encountered in other Yorkist contexts (given that all Margaret's siblings shared her Lancastrian/Beaufort ancestry). The fact that they are not tends to imply that, while the white rose was Margaret's dynastic emblem, the red roses which appear on her collar in the Louvre portrait have a different significance.

It is clear that two of the three items of jewellery in the Louvre portrait relate specifically to Margaret's marriage. We have remarked upon the pearl attached to the pendant B for Burgundy, and the alternating Cs and Ms of the *collier*. It would therefore be logical to conclude that the red and white roses (linked by symbolic knots) might also refer in some way to the Burgundian marriage. If, therefore, the white roses stand for Margaret, the red roses can only signify Charles the Bold.

The symbolism is credible, on two possible counts. If the red rose was already established as a Lancastrian emblem by 1468, its use by Charles on that account would be justified by his maternal descent from Philippa of Lancaster, Queen of Portugal (Henry IV's sister, and Charles' grandmother). It is a fact that in 1471, when news of the death of Henry VI reached the Burgundian court, Charles' mother, Isabella of Portugal, dowager Duchess of Burgundy, submitted a claim to the English throne to the English parliament, in her capacity as a Lancastrian heiress.[45] On the other hand, if the red rose was not yet established as a Lancastrian emblem,[46] we have already noted that the colours of Charles the Bold's livery badge were red and black, so that the choice of red roses to represent him would have been logical on that count. Since the pairing of red and white roses was already traditional, this explanation is very persuasive, for it fits perfectly the overall colour scheme of the collar. It also recalls the fact that, as noted earlier, on Margaret of York's crown small red and black roses occur alternately between the large white roses on the fleurons. The black roses on the Aachen crown seem otherwise to be inexplicable.[47]

Wilson, while rightly sceptical as to any possible Lancastrian significance of the red roses on Margaret's *collier*, prefers to see these flowers as symbols of love. It is, of course, by no mean impossible that they in fact encapsulate multiple levels of significance, representing both the bridegroom and his love for his bride. At the same time the well-known significance of both red and white roses in connection with Christ and the Virgin Mary may constitute a third level of meaning.

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[41] Or possibly, like the crown, silver gilt.

[42] Wilson, *Collier*, p. 112 describes these as 'stones', but they are shown as lustrous, and are clearly black and white pearls.

[43] Wilson's suggestion that the Ms are deliberately given the form of paired Vs to invoke the Valois dynasty of Burgundy is interesting and persuasive. *Collier*, p. 112

[44] Chrimes is inclined to give some slight credence to the red rose as a Lancastrian emblem. The present writer is more sceptical. S.B Chrimes, *Lancastrians, Yorkist and Henry VII*, London 1966, p. viii; J. Ashdown-Hill, 'The red rose of Lancaster?' *The Ricardian*, vol. 10, no. 133, June 1996, pp. 406-20.

[45] BL Add. Charter 8043. See J. Ashdown-Hill, 'The Lancastrian claim to the throne', *The Ricardian*, vol. 13 (2003), p. 35.

[46] The first person in the fifteenth century who can be proved to have used the red rose to symbolise the house of Lancaster is the Tudor king, Henry VII.

[47] Although, curiously, a portrait exists of Edward IV in which black and white roses are shown. See F. Hepburn, *Portraits of the Later Plantagenets*, Woodbridge 1986, p. 69.

The wearing of such a *collier* of knots and roses may have been a feature of Margaret's dress. It was not a *sine qua non*, for Margaret's portraits do not always show it, but, as we have seen, such a *collier* is represented again in the set of miniatures of 1468 which depict Margaret engaged in the Seven Acts of Mercy.[48] It also occurs in another miniature from the same manuscript which shows Margaret, attended by saints, kneeling in prayer before the Brussels church of SS Michael and Gudule (now Brussels Cathedral).[49] The fact that the *collier* is depicted more than once around Margaret's neck, tends to suggest that it was a real item of jewellery, which she actually wore. Even more interesting, however, is the fact that Margaret is not alone in wearing such an item of jewellery. There are at least three other fifteenth-century Burgundian depictions of very similar *colliers* in existence. Let us consider first the portraits of Maria Portinari in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (by Memling), and on the Portinari Altarpiece in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence (by Van der Goes), both of which show Maria wearing a *collier* (figure 6) which is remarkably similar to that of Margaret of York.[50]

Maria Portinari and Her *Collier*

Tommaso di Folco Portinari was born in 1432 and died in 1501. He was manager of the Bruges branch of the Medici bank until the Medici withdrew from Bruges in 1480, after which he continued work on his own account. In 1470 he married the sixteen year old Maria di Francesco Bandini Baroncelli. Their first child, baptised Margherita, was born in 1471. Margherita is depicted in the Portinari altarpiece, kneeling behind her mother, and appears to be about nine years old, so that the Van der Goes painting probably dates from *circa* 1480. The Memling portrait of Maria is thought to be earlier, and was probably commissioned, together with the matching portrait of Tommaso, at the time of the Portinari marriage in 1470. 'Tommaso Portinari was the duke's most important financial advisor and creditor'.[51] His wife may have known Margaret of York, and it was perhaps as a compliment to the duchess that the Portinaris chose to call their first child Margherita.

X-ray examination of the Memling portrait of Maria Portinari reveals that details of her costume were originally planned differently by the artist, and were subsequently altered.[52] This, together with the fact that the same elaborate jewelled *collier* is depicted around her neck in both the Memling and the Van der Goes paintings, makes it reasonable to assume that its inclusion was not accidental, and may well have been at the sitter's own behest. The wearing of such *colliers* was no doubt a fashion of the period, and examples appear in other portraits. The Donne altarpiece shows Lady Donne wearing a Yorkist collar of suns and roses with a pendant lion;[53] Petrus Christus depicts one of the nieces of Lady Eleanor Talbot and Elizabeth Talbot, Duchess of Norfolk – probably the latter's namesake, Elizabeth Talbot, future Viscountess Lisle – wearing a *collier* formed of three strands of gold links, with tiny gold roses between the strands.[54] Viscountess Lisle's tomb effigy at Astley, Warwickshire, shows a similar *collier* of three strands, this time with a pendant attached. Memling's portrait of Barbara Morel shows her wearing a plain gold collar of S-shaped links, with a jewelled trefoil pendant,[55] while his Catarina Tani has a pearl necklace with a pendant flower.[56] In her book of hours Mary of Burgundy is shown wearing a *collier* of interlinked chains in a lace-like pattern.[57] However, not one of these *colliers* bears the slightest resemblance to that of Margaret of York. Most of them are of plain gold, without enamelled decoration, jewels or pearls, and certainly without coloured roses. In the light of this evidence the striking similarity between the design of Maria Portinari's *collier* and that of Margaret of York, whatever its significance, can hardly be accidental.

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[48] Miniature from *Benois seront les Miséricordieux*, studio of Jean Dreux, MS 9296, f. 1, Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels. Cover illustration from Weightman, *Margaret of York*.

[49] Miniature from *Benois seront les Miséricordieux*, MS 9296, f. 17, Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels. Illustrated in Weightman, *Margaret of York*, p. 204.

[50] D. De Vos, *Hans Memling, the Complete Works*, London 1994, pp. 9-10.

[51] Weightman, *Margaret of York*, p. 80.

[52] De Vos, *Memling*, p. 9. Lightbown, *Medieval European Jewellery*, p. 286 and figure 151, notes the Memling painting of Maria Portinari's *collier*, but does not refer to the depiction of the same item by Van der Goes, nor to its similarity to Margaret of York's *collier* (though he also mentions the latter, p. 289, figure 154).

[53] An illustration of this triptych is published in Lassaigne, *Flemish Painting*, p. 134, and it is extensively illustrated in L. Campbell, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings*, London 1998.

[54] Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, no. 532.

[55] Brussels, Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts, illustrated in K.B. McFarlane, *Hans Memling*, Oxford 1971, figure 93.

[56] McFarlane, *Hans Memling*, figure 43.

[57] Illustrated in J. Harthan, *Books of Hours and their Owners*, London 1977, p. 110.

Lightbown has distinguished three categories of late medieval collar: the livery collar (distributed to retainers), the collar of chivalric orders (worn by knights of the order) and, intermediate between the other two, the collar of a personal 'order', such as Philip the Bold's order of the Golden Tree (see above). Olivier de La Marche preferred to call this third category not an 'order' but a 'device'.[58] Such 'devices' were either given out by sovereigns as a mark of favour, or voluntarily assumed by underlings as what might nowadays be termed a sign of political correctness. The wearing by Maria Portinari of a *collier* so markedly of the 'device' of Margaret of York could be an example of either of these phenomena.

There are, nevertheless, minor differences between the two *colliers*. Maria Portinari's is topped by a row of all black pearls. The pendant letters C and M, shown on Margaret's *collier*, are replaced by simple pear-shaped pendant drops with an open-work design, alternately of plain gold, and of black enamel, while the roses on Maria Portinari's *collier* are of open-work, and orientated differently, and they figure in a sequence of white, red and black. This reminds us that, while white roses stood for Margaret, red and black were Charles the Bold's colours. The colour pattern again recalls the design of Margaret of York's crown.

On Maria Portinari's *collier* pearls are again conspicuous, but in this case they are supplemented by the addition of a few precious stones. Within their enamelled open-work, Maria's black-edged roses are composed exclusively of white pearls (with a very large pearl at the centre of each flower). The roses with white-enamelled edges and red-enamelled edges also have white pearls forming their petals, but the white-edged flowers have red stones set at their centres, while the red-edged roses have very dark, apparently black stones. Thus, collectively, the roses of the *collier* once again constitute a total composition in red, white and black. Since we have two surviving depictions of the Portinari *collier*, from the hands of different artists, there is no reason to doubt that this *collier*, like that of Margaret of York, once existed as a real piece of jewellery.

The *Collier* of Memling's *Salome*

A third example of a *collier* of knots and roses, similar to those of Margaret of York and Maria Portinari, is shown in Memling's St John Altarpiece.[59] On the left wing of this triptych the artist has depicted the execution of St John the Baptist. The Herodian princess, Salome, stands waiting with a charger to receive the severed head of the saint. She wears a kind of crown adorned with pearls, rubies and black stones, and also a *collier*. The main strand of this is narrower than in either the Margaret of York example or that worn by Maria Portinari, but it is likewise composed of enamelled, five-petalled roses, linked by gold knots. The colour sequence of the visible roses (from left to right) is black, red, white, red, black, red, white, red, black. Below the *collier* hang drop-shaped pendants, similar to those of Maria Portinari's *collier*, but larger. These alternate with pendant pearls.[60] Although the Memling *Salome*'s *collier* differs from the other two examples in the relative dimensions of its component parts, it clearly conforms to the same basic design. It is more difficult, however, to guess whether the Salome *collier* ever actually existed. It was, perhaps, an invention by Memling, inspired by the real *colliers* of Margaret of York and Maria Portinari.

Since the designs of Margaret's *collier*, of the Portinari *collier* and of the Salome *collier* all seem to reflect the design of Margaret of York's crown, it would appear that all of these items of jewellery celebrate the Burgundian ducal union with a princess of the house of York. It is not difficult to see why Margaret of York herself should have worn such items of jewellery. It is, perhaps, harder to explain why similar *colliers* should adorn the necks of Maria Portinari and Salome. The relevance of the overall colour scheme of the *colliers* to Margaret of York's marriage may, however, be reinforced by one final piece of evidence: a Flemish parade shield of the third quarter of the fifteenth century, now in the British Museum.[61] This shield bears the figure of a knight kneeling before a lady. The knight is making a declaration of love, for above his head is a scroll inscribed *Vous ou la mort*. The figures are not labelled, and have not previously been identified. Indeed, there is no reason to consider them to be actual portraits. However, they may well be symbolic figures of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York. The knight's features somewhat

[58] Lightbown, *Medieval European Jewellery*, p. 267.

[59] Bruges, Sint-Janshospitaal, Memlingmuseum, inv. O.SJ175.1.

[60] For a detailed (but monochrome) image of this *collier*, see McFarlane, *Hans Memling*, figure 31.

[61] BM gallery 42, Medieval, case 13, M&ME 1863,5-1,1. This shield is a work of very high quality. For details of its provenance and conservation, see T.D. Kendrick, 'A Flemish painted shield', *British Museum Quarterly*, vol. 13 (1939), pp. 33-34.

resemble those of Charles,[62] and the lady wears a red and gold brocade gown trimmed with ermine, similar to that of Margaret of York in the 'Seven Acts of Mercy' miniatures.[63] She also wears a golden girdle from which hangs a chatelaine terminating in a single large pearl (*marguerite*), which she offers to her knight. Once again, the overall colour scheme of the shield's decoration is red and black, white and gold. It seems plausible that this artefact may have figured in some way in the extended celebrations, which took place in Bruges, following Margaret of York's wedding.

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[62] Compare, for example, the portrait of Charles by van der Weyden, the figure on the reliquary which Charles presented to Liège Cathedral and his tomb effigy, illustrated in Weightman, *Margaret of York*, pp. 64, 66, 103.

[63] See above, nn. 45 and 46. It is also more or less identical to Margaret's dress as portrayed in N. Finet, *Le dialogue de la duchesse de Bourgogne à Jésus Christ*, BL, Add MS. 7970, f. 1v, illustrated in A.G. Pearson, 'Gendered spectator, gendered subject', *Publication du Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes*, 44, 2004, p. 115.

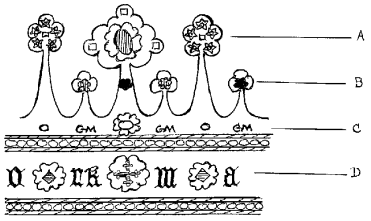

Fig. 1
The principal elements of the decorative scheme of Margaret of York's crown.

A. On the *fleurons*, blue and white star-shaped flowers (borage?) set with pearls. A white rose set with a red stone on the central *fleuron.*
B. Alternating red and black roses on the small points.
C. Conjoined initials C-M, alternating with pearls. At the front a white rose set with a baroque pearl.
D. The letters of Margaret's name alternating with white roses, and edged above and below by strings of small pearls. The white roses are set with blue stones (in the case of the central rose, a blue enamelled cross). In the central position at the back of the circle (not shown), an enamelled shield of the arms of Burgundy impaling England.

Fig. 2
The Virgin enthroned, wearing a small crown, 11-12 cms in diameter, over a veil. The crown has a high central *fleuron*. After Crivelli's *Madona della Candeletta*, Brera Gallery, Milan.

Fig. 3
The Virgin enthroned, wearing a small crown, 11-12 cms in diameter, over a veil. The crown has a high central *fleuron*. After Crivelli's *Madona della Candeletta*, Brera Gallery, Milan.

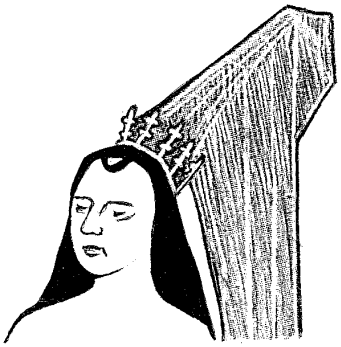

Fig 4
Cleopatra VII wearing a small crown round the base of her *atour*, after BL Royal MS 14 E. V f. 348v.

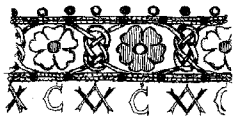

Fig. 6
Section of the rose *collier* of Margaret of York.

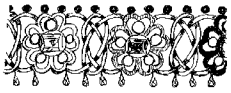

Fig. 7
Section of the rose *collier* of Maria Portinari.

Fig. 8
Section of the rose *collier* of Memling's *Salome*.