

9. A SMALL BRASS IN KIRKCUDBRIGHT MUSEUM.

This small group of 6 boys and 8 girls, engraved on a brass plate $11\frac{1}{2}$ by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, was noticed by Mr James S. Richardson, F.S.A.Scot., when visiting the Museum in May 1946. It is in Case E on north side of gallery (fig. 1).



Fig. 1.

The group is typical English work of c. 1530, and formed part of a larger brass which probably consisted of effigies of one or both parents, an inscription (beneath which the children would normally be placed), and one or more shields.

The hair of the boys is cut to shoulder length, and over their doublets they wear long loose-sleeved gowns with plain collar and cuffs; their feet are encased in clumsy broad-toed shoes. The girls are depicted with long hair and pedimental frontlets, and gowns cut square at the neck, with plain turned-back cuffs; round the waist of each is a sash, that of the eldest secured with a cinquefoil clasp, and the others tied, with ends falling down in front.

The metal is very thin, varying from about $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{3}{32}$ of an inch, the surface

worn and somewhat uneven. Despite the shallowness of the engraving, a few of the lines still retain traces of black colouring.

This group appears to have been acquired about 1910. The descriptive label reads:

Monumental Brass.

Locality : Stewartry.

Presented by John Maclellan, Esq., London.

It is not known how it came into the donor's possession.

I cannot but regard the Stewartry attribution with grave suspicion, for I have so far found no evidence of any English brasses having been laid down in Scotland. All despoiled slabs I have seen north of the Border are of Tournai stone, whereas the English brasses were inlaid in slabs of Purbeck or other native marble, and I think there is little doubt that this brass came from some church in England.

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