

NOTICE OF A SEPULCHRAL SLAB DISCOVERED ON THE SITE OF
THE HOSPITAL OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, NEAR LINCOLN.¹

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ABOUT a mile to the south of Lincoln, adjacent to the course of the old city wall, as it existed in 1610, and to the Sincil Dyke, the fosse of the fortifications in this quarter, a quadrangular enclosure of about seven acres is still to be seen at the north-western angle of the great South Common; this fenced ground is known as the Malandery Field or Closes. The spot is not shown in the Map of "Lindum Colonia," taken by Stukeley, in 1722,² reproduced in the Transactions of the Meeting of the Institute at Lincoln in 1848. That Map extends only to the Sincil Dyke, before-mentioned, and to the position of the Great Bar Gate, at the southern termination of the High Street.

Here stood the Hospital of the Holy Innocents, called the Maladerie,³ Malandery, or Leprosery, "*Domus Leprosorum*," erected outside the city as a refuge for loathsome and pitiable sufferers, who were regarded with abhorrence and excluded from the resorts of their fellow-men. Evidences of the former existence of extensive buildings may be seen in the broken surface of the Malandery Field, and even the site of the church of the Hospital has been pointed out in local maps; of the original buildings, the remains of which were destroyed by fire about the middle of the last century, not one stone is left upon another. The history of the Institution, with a plan, and an ample account of the dreadful disease that extensively prevailed in this and in most European countries from the tenth to the close of the sixteenth century, has

¹ A short notice of this sepulchral slab was given in the twenty-second Report of the Archit. Soc. Dioc. of Lincoln, p. xi.

² Stukeley, *Itin. Cur.*, cent. i., p. 88.

³ See Ducange, *v. Maladeria*, *nocomium leprosorum*, &c., and Roquefort,

v. Maladrerie, and *Ladriere*. It is stated that in the times of Louis VIII., about 1225, there were not less than 2000 leper-houses in France. Thomas of Walsingham gives the number of 1900 Spitals for lepers in Christendom.

been given by Dr. Cookson in a volume of Memoirs communicated to the Lincolnshire Topographical Society.⁴

It is stated that the establishment of a House for Lepers had been one of the good works of Bishop Remigius (1067—1092), who removed the see to Lincoln; it was probably the same that was endowed by Henry I., according to documents printed in the *Monasticon*.⁵

In excavations for the new railway from Lincoln to Honington, in 1865, a coffin-lid, or sepulchral slab of unusual design was brought to light in the Malandery Field. Beneath were remains of a grave formed of rude rubble work, on a spot that had apparently been occupied by the choir of the church attached to the Hospital, known to have stood where the singular memorial here figured was found. The slab, supposed to be of Ketton stone, measures 6 ft. 11 in. in length, 2 ft. 2 in. in width at the head, and 17 in. at the feet; the thickness is 6 in. Its chief ornament is a cross carved in relief; the stem is enriched by bold foliated crockets; the head of the cross has diagonal limbs; these, as well as those of the head are decorated, in like fashion as the stem, with foliated finials or knops of foliage. The remarkable features of this cross, however, are three apertures, accurately shown in the wood-cut; through the upper one, of circular form, in the centre of the head of the cross, is seen the head of apparently an aged female, with a veil or kerchief falling in narrow folds on either side; lower down, in the position where the conjoined hands in the customary gesture of prayer would be found, they appear as if seen through a narrow opening of pointed oval form; near the lower end of the slab are seen the feet, through a circular aperture; the pointed toes seem to indicate close-fitting shoes or stockings. Around the margin of the slab, on three of its sides, is the inscription, forming a rhyming *quatrain*, as follows:—

+ : WS : KY PAR ICI PASSET :
 PVR LE ALME : IVEYT : PRIET :
 KY FV LE FEM HOW DE ROVCEBY :
 KY DEV : DE LE ALME : HEN AY MERCY.

⁴ A Selection of Papers relative to the County of Lincoln. Lincoln: W. and B. Brooke, 1843. See, at p. 29, a memoir on the Hospital called La Malardri at Lincoln: with some account of Ancient

Customs touching Leprosy. By. W. D. Cookson, M.D.

⁵ Dugdale, *Mon. Ang.*, vol. vi. p. 627; Tanner's *Notitia*.

Or, in the French of modern times :—

Vous, qui par ici passez,
 Pour l'ame Iveyt priez,
 Qui fut la femme Hue de Rouceby,
 Que Dieu de l'ame en ait mercy.

The date of the slab seems to be about 1350. The name was doubtless taken from Rauceby, a parish near Sleaford, Lincolnshire.⁶ Several persons of the name occur in local history. In an inquisition regarding possessions of the Knights Hospitalers in Lincolnshire, in 1185, we find, at Risby, Andrew Avetorp, who held lands of the gift of Walter de Raucebi; William de Rauceby, of Holdingham, obtained manumission of Bishop Oliver Sutton, in 1287; and John de Rauceby was prebendary of Carlton-cum-Thurlby, from 1379—88, when he met with a violent death on Lincoln Heath. No notice has, however, been found of Hugh de Rauceby, nor can it be ascertained in what capacity Ivetta, his relict, may have lived and died at the Maladerie, within the church of which her body seems to have been interred.

It may here deserve notice that lepers were so far excluded from the pale of society, that they were forbidden to enter churches, and were left without any provision for the burial of their dead. Some of the larger houses sought to alleviate this dreadful condition by building chapels; here, however, they found an obstacle in the parochial clergy, by whom infringements of their rights were apprehended. In 1197 the matter was taken into consideration by the third Lateran Council, and the conduct of the clergy was censured by Alexander III., who authorised any community of leper-folk, who could maintain a priest, to build a chapel and have a cemetery of their own. They were also exempted from payment of tithes.

The costly character of the slab would lead us to infer that Ivetta de Rauceby was a person of some consideration—a benefactress, possibly, to the institution, in which, doubt-

⁶ A cross-slab, dated 1385, the name—De Rauceby—unfortunately in part defaced, was found about 1854 in the south aisle of Rauceby church, and is supposed to commemorate the builder of that part of the fabric. This slab has been figured,

Arch. Journ. vol. xi. p. 189. See several examples of head-stones with crosses found used as “wailers” in the church of that place.—*Ibid.*, vol. x. pp. 63, 162; see also a notice of a mural painting there, vol. xi. p. 68.

less, she may have sought a refuge as afflicted with that dreadful disease from which no class of society was exempt. The tale of Syr Amis and Syr Amiloun supplies a picture of the "mesel" expelled from his home by his wife, and confined in a wayside hut near his own gate. The Scottish poet, Henrysoun, also, about 1460, in his "Testament of Creseide," gives a picture of Leper-life in the "Spitel at the Towne's ende," similar to the Malandery at the southern gate of Lincoln. We learn from these ancient poems that even the lady of high degree, afflicted with that dire disorder, became an outcast, and was driven to seek a doleful refuge in the House of Lazars.

In regard to the occurrence of the memorial under consideration, whether we regard the relict of Hugh de Rouceby as having been herself afflicted with disease, or as a person who may have been interred in the church of the Malandery on account of her charity and benevolence towards its suffering inmates, it may be remarked that there were "*consorores*" within its walls. In an Inquisition in the reign of Edward III., it was found by the jurors that certain women dwelled in the Hospital of the Holy Innocents, "*se habentes tanquam sorores—quæ non intraverunt per viam rectam, sed per viam pecuniæ,*" namely, by a bribe given to the *Custos*.⁷

It has been observed that the slab recently disinterred at the Malandery in railway operations is of unusual character. Several memorials, however, of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries might be enumerated, in which there is a capricious and somewhat grotesque combination of the sepulchral cross with portions of the effigy, the latter being either in low relief upon the face of the slab, or shown through apertures in various parts of it, as in the curious example under consideration. It seems to have been a local fashion, mostly adopted in Lincolnshire and adjacent counties.⁸ Although the expression of the face is almost invariably in sepulchral effigies that of life, it deserves consideration whether the

⁷ Dugd. Mon. Ang., vol. vi. p. 627, Caley's edit. It is somewhat singular that occasionally a recluse should have been formally closed up in a leper-house. By 2 Pat. Edw. III., 15, it seems to have been granted that "*Eliz. de Elme posset esse reclusa infra Hosp. SS. Innoc. extra*

Linc."

⁸ Mr. Boutell remarks that monuments of this description are chiefly to be found in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, and some parts of Wales. Christ. Monuments, sect. 11, p. 119.

intention of the sculptor may not have been to suggest that portions of the corpse enclosed in the coffin were actually visible through the openings in its lid.⁹ Gough gives amongst other examples the strangely combined memorial of Joan, wife of William Disney, at Norton Disney, Lincolnshire; the lady's bust and arms, with hands conjoined, are there shown, surrounded by escutcheons of arms and accessory decorations; the lower part of the slab is charged with a cross, and through a trefoiled aperture at its base the feet of the deceased lady appear resting on an animal, probably a dog. Other examples are figured by Mr. Cutts in his *Manual of Sepulchral Slabs and Crosses*; ¹ a few sepulchral brasses also occur that partake of a similar peculiarity in their design, as, for instance, one in the Chapel of Merton College, date about 1310; in a memorial of a priest at Chinnor, Oxfordshire, the tonsured head is introduced in a beautifully floriated cross.²

It only remains, in conclusion, to offer a few remarks on the somewhat unusual name, IVEYT, occurring on the memorial to which attention has been invited. It may possibly be another form of the name Judith, which is not uncommon in Anglo-Saxon and subsequent times, and which must be held in honored remembrance as that of the daughter of Charles the Bald, the consort of Ethelwulf, by whom our Alfred was instructed in the first use of letters.³ The kinswoman of the Conqueror, given in marriage to the powerful Earl of Northumberland, Waltheof, was Judith, daughter of Earl Lambert de Lens, and sister of Stephen, Earl of Albemarle. In the *Life of Waltheof*, however, edited by Michel, in the "*Chroniques Anglo-Normandes*," from a MS. at Douai, her name has been printed both as "*Juetta*," and "*Juditha*."⁴ So likewise the late Sir Francis Palgrave, in extracts from the "*Cronica Canonicorum B. Marie Huntingdon*," preserved

⁹ In a singular cross-slab in Romsey Abbey Church, Hants, a hand appears as if emerging from the coffin on its dexter side, and holding a staff with a small drapery or *vexillum* appended to it, possibly a crossier reversed; the tomb may be the memorial of one of the abbesses of Romsey.

¹ See Plates xxxi., lxvii., lxviii. to lxxi. The head is mostly shown through a quatrefoiled aperture formed either in

the centre of the head of the cross or immediately over it.

² *Manual of Monumental Brasscs*; by the Rev. H. Haines; Part I. p. cxxxv.

³ In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* her name is written Jeothete, or Juthytta. The *neptis* of Edward the Confessor married to Tostin is named Juthitta.

⁴ *Chron. Ang. Norm.*, tom. ii. pp. 117, 121, 123, &c. Rouen, Ed. Frere, 1836.

amongst the documents relating to the affairs of Scotland, in the Treasury of the Exchequer, has printed the name of the same lady. David, one of the sons of Malcolm King of Scots, married, as there stated, "Matildam comitissam Hunting' neptem Willelmi regis Anglie, filiam Ivette que fuit filia Lamberti de Louns comitis."⁵

It must be admitted that it is difficult to account for the substitution of Ivetta for Judith. So singular a change does not appear quite satisfactory. It has been suggested, with considerable probability, that Ivetta may have been the feminine form of Ivo. In the Calendar of the Patent Rolls, p. 39, we find "Ivetta de Veteri ponte," one of the two daughters and coheiresses of Robert de Vipont, who died about 1265. Ivo occurs as a name in the same family. By Dugdale, however, in his account of the Vipont family, this lady, who married Roger de Leyburn, is called Idonea. The question must be left to those who take interest in the investigation of personal names in the Middle Ages.⁶

In the church of Easton, Northamptonshire, there is an inscription on the south side of the chancel, that commemorates Sir Richard de Lindone, lord of the manor, who died 39 Hen. III., 1255, "e dame Ivete sa feme." It is given by Bridges, *Hist. North.*, vol. ii. p. 447.

⁵ Documents, &c., preserved in the Treasury of the Exchequer, vol. i. pp. 101, 104.

⁶ Ivett and Ivatt, it may deserve to

be noticed, still occur as surnames. See Burke's *Gen. Armory*. Ivatts is a name in the Isle of Ely at the present time.